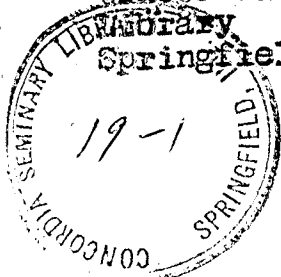


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MOTTO: *Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you: but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment.* — 1 Cor. 1, 10.

"We have no intention of yielding sight of the eternal, immutable truth of God for the sake of temporal peace, tranquility, and unity (which, moreover, is not in our power to do). Nor would such peace and unity, since it is devised against the truth and for its suppression, have any permanency. Still less are we inclined to adorn and conceal a corruption of the pure doctrine and manifest, condemned errors. But we entertain heartfelt pleasure and love for, and are on our part sincerely inclined and anxious to advance, that unity according to our utmost power, by which His glory remains to God uninjured, nothing of the divine truth of the Holy Gospel is surrendered, no room is given to the least error, poor sinners are brought to true, genuine repentance, raised up by faith, confirmed in new obedience, and thus justified and eternally saved alone through the sole merit of Christ." — Concluding Statement of the Formula of Concord concerning the Requirements of Confessional Fellowship among Lutherans of the Augsburg Confession. *Trigl. Conc.*, p. 1095.

"It has been our purpose . . . that all unlawful, doubtful, suspicious, and condemned doctrines, wherever and in whatever books they may be found, and whoever may have written them, or even now may be disposed to defend them, might be exposed, distinctly repudiated, so that every one may be faithfully warned against the errors, which are spread here and there in the writings of some theologians, and no one be misled in this matter by the reputation (authority) of any man." — *Formula of Concord (Thorough Declaration), Comprehensive Summary; Trigl. Conc.*, P. 857.

"These highly important matters (the business of religion) concern also the common people and laymen (as they are called), who, inasmuch as they are Christians, must for their salvation distinguish between pure and false doctrine." — *Formula of Concord (Thorough Declaration), Comprehensive Summary; Trigl. Conc.*, P. 853.

VOLUME XIX

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NUMBER 1

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● Publicity of a Sort

"Dr. Oswald Hoffmann, the Lutheran Hour speaker, told us this one while in Milwaukee for the Lutheran Hour Rally. It seems all the Missouri bigwigs were in St. Louis for the annual fiscal conference. They were taken to the ball park in the evening

[at the expense of the synodically-owned Concordia Publishing House — Ed. CL] to see the Cardinals meet and beat the Braves. Between innings an announcement was made that 1,000 Missouri Synod officials were at the game. Immediately thereafter the park organizer struck up 'On, Wisconsin!' — *The Milwaukee Lutheran* (October, 1957).

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"As soon as we look more to our synod than to the invisible kingdom of God, the kingdom of grace and salvation, we begin to be a sect. For this is really the essence of sectarianism that one has his eye on his little fellowship above all, even though the kingdom of God may suffer harm thereby." "That preacher is no true preacher who merely seeks to fanaticize his congregation for the Lutheran Church, or for the Missouri Synod, or, worse still, only for the Iowa District. Such men are bad preachers. They must rather direct people to Christ and say: See, we preach the pure Word of God, in which the everlasting Gospel of Christ is continued; that is why you should adhere to us, and therefore we say, leave us as soon as we no longer do this! For salvation by no means depends on us, nor also on the Missouri Synod. So if it no longer preaches the pure Word of God, then it is worthy of nothing but that one forsake it." — Dr. C. F. W. Walther, "Concerning the Chief Obligations Which a Synod Has if it Rightly Wants to Bear the Name of an Evangelical Lutheran Synod." Doctrinal Essay at the First Convention of the Iowa District of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, 1879; Proceedings, pp. 112, 114.

What is Lutheranism?

That is a question which many people have been asking themselves because of the wide publicity given to the Lutheran World Federation the middle of August in Minneapolis. The answer to that will vary, depending on whether it refers to the churches which claim the name "Lutheran" or to the original meaning of Lutheranism.

The Lutheran churches as they exist today stand for very dissimilar things. As a writer in the Christian Century puts it in stilted language: "Einar Billing of Sweden has said that there is 'nothing more slack than strict Lutheranism.' But it is also true that there is 'nothing more strict than strict Lutheranism.' It incorporates both a pietistic moralism and a Lutheresque ethos that is anything but rigorous. It can be isolationistic and adaptionistic, traditional and radical." After catching our breath after swallowing such "scholarly" words, we conclude that he means to say that the present-day "Lutheran" churches of the world are characterized by many contradictory positions in doctrine and practice. In this verdict the writer is correct.

If you want to know what true Lutheranism is you must not study the conglomeration represented in the Lutheran World Federation. (Luther himself would not be a member of it if he were living today but would denounce it in the strongest terms for its unionistic spirit and make-up.) Luther always insisted upon Scripture as the only real basis for all doctrine. His watch-word was: "The Word they still shall let remain." And that applies also over against the apostate churches which bear his name.

To be truly Lutheran means to be truly Scriptural. Anything else besmirches his name and, what is worse, is an offense to God. The truly Lutheran Church is the Bible Church.

I. P. Frey, in the *Northwestern Lutheran*.

A Vicious Principle

"Have not the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory, with respect of persons." — James 2, 1.

• Two Fine Testimonies from Australia Concerning the LWF

The *Theological Quarterly* of the Wisconsin Synod in its October issue published two letters containing appraisals of the Lutheran World Federation's Third Assembly, at Minneapolis, by two leading churchmen from Australia. The first of these was written by Dr. Cl. Hoopmann, President of the Ev. Lutheran Church of Australia, which is affiliated with the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod. The second was written by the Rev. F. W. Noack, President of the Queensland District of the United Evangelical Lutheran Church of Australia, which is affiliated with the American Lutheran Church. Both men were official observers at the convention in Minneapolis.

Dr. Hoopmann says, in part:

"Whilst the theme: 'Christ Frees and Unites' was well sustained, there was no great emphasis on the formal principle of the Reformation, the *sola Scriptura*. We missed the necessary emphasis on the written Word at Hannover. We missed it again at Minneapolis. Many seemed to lose sight of the fact that loyalty to Christ requires loyalty to His Word.

"Another matter we sorely missed in the theses was a clear statement setting forth in unambiguous language the distinctive doctrines of the Lutheran Church. With regard to the essence of the Lord's Supper, for instance, we found no clear confessional statement in the document: 'Christ Frees and Unites,' and, although reference was made to this at various group meetings, no clear statement was included in the final theses. Why? At Hannover we heard Prof. Staehlin advocate open communion; at Minneapolis we heard men trying to justify intercommunion with the Reformed. The *satis est* of Augustana VII was stressed, but not the *damnamus* contained in Augustana X. [Cf. our comment below. P.H.B.]

"The manner in which our Australian proposals were dealt with was also most unsatisfactory. Although the report of the Special Committee stated that these proposals went to the very heart of the nature of the LWF, and although the report called for a discussion on the floor of the Assembly, not more than ¼ hour was devoted to this matter and that at the close of the morning session. Some may stress the fact that the proposals were not rejected but referred

to committees for further consideration and study; but we dare not lose sight of the fact that these proposals were already submitted to the Executive Committee of the LWF in 1955. There has, therefore, been ample time for consideration and study. The inability to reach a decision with regard to the matter submitted is most significant and not helpful to our union negotiations in Australia.

"Finally the manner in which representatives of heterodox churches and 'ecumenical' bodies were received and welcomed and permitted to address the Assembly revealed a tendency which, if not combated, must lead to ever greater religious compromise and the eventual complete denial of the distinctive Lutheran faith. There can be no God-pleasing ecumenical development if the confessional principle is not upheld. If we try to please men more than God we deny our faith. If the Lutheran Church fails to apply the *damnamus* as our fathers did, it cannot prosper.

"Eternity alone will reveal accurately to what extent the Minneapolis Assembly helped the cause of Christ and to what extent it did harm. The Assembly certainly showed us how important it is to heed the words of the inspired Apostle: 'Brethren stand fast, and hold the traditions, which ye have been taught.'"

The Rev. F. W. Noack of the United Evangelical Lutheran Church, whose testimony is terse and to the point, and if anything even stronger than that of Dr. Hoopmann, has said:

"It is my firm conviction that instead of wasting precious time with the bishops and archbishops all our energy should be devoted to the strengthening of the ties between Lutheran Churches which earnestly strive to adhere to the Confessions. May God have mercy upon our Lutheran Churches. The LWF is a champion of unionism and we cannot for conscience sake join."

With reference to the *satis est* of Art. VII of the Augsburg Confession referred to above, "*satis est*" means: *it is enough*, namely toward the true unity of the Church; that is, to be united with Christ and His mystic Body, the invisible Communion of Saints, which is the only unity of which Art. VII speaks. The Lutheran Church here insists that agreement with human rites is not necessary to faith; that agreement with the Gospel "is enough." This article was not

only misused at the LWF Assembly in the interest of its false requirements toward *external union*, but even then such things as the following were said (in the Lecture on Sub-Topic Two: The Unity of the Church in Christ, by Dr. Hans-Werner Genischen): "As Lutherans we ought to know, that differences in liturgy or church policy or in the so-called non-theological factors do not permit us to side-step the question of external union on the basis of Articles VII and VIII of the Augsburg Confession — unless there are absolutely compelling reasons why we should do so." Quite aside from the last vicious remark, which nullifies what is previously said, the conditions of external (confessional) fellowship are not laid down by the Lutheran Church in Article VII of the Augsburg Confession, which rather answers the question: how do men come to faith and remain in it? How are they united to Christ and His mystic body, and how do they remain in that great (invisible) spiritual communion? The Scriptural conditions of external fellowship are laid down by the Lutheran Church in Art. X of its Formula of Concord, where it speaks in no uncertain terms of agreement to the whole Christian doctrine and all of its articles, and elsewhere. We shall again treat this matter in our review of the official *Message of the Third Assembly of the LWF*. Our quotation from Dr. Genischen's Lecture appears on p. 47 of that publication.

Summarizing its own position, and referring especially to the very pertinent and timely conclusion in the letter of the Rev. F. W. Noack, the Wisconsin Synod's *Theological Quarterly* says:

"These appraisals lead us to the very heart of the question: What is the LWF at present? The question is not what the LWF may develop into in the course of time after it has devoted much study to the Lutheran Confessions. No, the question is what is the LWF at present. Is it or is it not a unionistic endeavor? Answering this question in the affirmative — and how can it be answered otherwise — we have every reason to 'devote all our energy to the strengthening of the ties between Lutheran Churches which earnestly strive to adhere to the Confessions.'"

Certainly, this is well said.

Would to God that the Missouri Synod might be given *leaders*, men who lend their best efforts toward restoring the God-given confessional unity in doctrine and practice

that once characterized the Missouri Synod and made it truly great, and of our dear Synodical Conference; men who feel less obligated to follow unionists around only to hear them reject again and again the truth for which we stand. Let's insist that the Synodical Conference be restored to its original purpose of serving as a rallying center for all who really want sound Lutheranism. Thus, and only thus, can our Church hope, under God, hope once more really to become great in the sight of God and of honorable men.

P. H. B.

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● The Spirit of THE MILWAUKEE LUTHERAN

The leading article in the October, 1957, issue of *The Milwaukee Lutheran*, official publication of Lutheran Men in America of Wisconsin, began with the following two paragraphs:

"There are those who find fault with it, and those who will not join it, but on one point all fair-minded Lutherans must agree — the Lutheran World Federation Assembly in Minneapolis provided the world outside of Lutheranism with the most positive impression the Church has been able to present in many years.

"Here, in contrast with the petty bickerings that break into public print periodically, were thousands of Lutherans from all over the world, meeting in peace and planning constructively."

Positive? Where was there so much as a positive impression that the Holy Scriptures, the written Word, are in all of their parts and words the inspired word of God, — an impression ever so much needed on the part of the Lutheran World Federation? Or does this belong to the "petty bickerings" of which the article speaks? What did the LWF "construct" in Minneapolis? And in what kind of "peace" was it met?

The two paragraphs which we have quoted, we believe, are enough to characterize the spirit of the Lutheran Men in

America. And we are still to try the spirits that have gone out into the world, whether they are of God!

P. H. B.

● Slightly Tart Grapes

(Edit. Note: In the wake of recent "world" conventions of churches, the following appeared in the *Christian Century* under the heading given above. *Confessional Lutheran*.)

SIR: Whereas even a cat may look at a queen, cats are not often found where queens foregather. Thanks, however, to *The Christian Century* some of us may gaze afar off at the ecclesiastical elite whose activities are properly recorded in your pages. As a shop girl derives vicarious satisfaction from the society page account of a glittering world which she can never know, so we hedgerow parsons delight in the perusal of the peregrinations of our peripatetic prelates.

To those who find it difficult to spare the time and money necessary for a brief sojourn at near-by Seaside City, it is gratifying that a select and seemingly unchanging segment of the servants of the church can flit about the world from conference to conference, from inspection tour to inspection tour, with the carefree abandon of the Duke and Duchess of Windsor.

It is good to remember that through our tiny tithe paid to the denominational or interdenominational body which makes possible these pilgrimages without expense to the participants, we have a part in their bons voyages and pleasant sojourns. We profoundly hope that the momentous matters which they must discuss and the world-shaking pronouncements expected from them will not deprive them of a happy holiday. For those uncounted thousands who watch and wait and work at home, I am,

RUSSELL C. STROUP

Georgetown Presbyterian Church
Washington, D. C.

● A Refreshing Breeze from St. Louis Concerning Billy Graham's Campaign

The *Concordia Theological Monthly* for Dec., 1957, published an article by Dr. Martin H. Scharlemann concerning Billy Graham's New York Crusade which is rather refreshing, especially in these days when so much

comes out of St. Louis that is anything but refreshing.

One of the most offensive things about Billy Graham's "evangelistic" campaigns is his cooperation with Modernists of every sort and his referring of prospects to e.g. even Jewish synagogues. However, Dr. Scharlemann's article restricts itself mainly to Billy Graham's preaching, and we were glad to see this testimony of a much needed sort. The article, which appeared under the heading "Looking Back at Billy Graham's New York Crusade," is as follows.

"Life counted them! There were only 65,000, instead of the 200,000 that supporters of Billy Graham claimed were in attendance at his last rally in New York City. This sizable discrepancy is one of the disturbing features of the Graham crusade. Men who have observed the methods of some of the leaders of the Graham organization have been disturbed by their failure to keep in mind that their task is a spiritual one.

"A word is in order at this point on the evangelist and his crusade, particularly since he had occasion to address the convention of the Atlantic District of our Synod last summer. Everyone there was greatly impressed by his sincerity and personal humility. Yet one can hardly avoid uttering two cautions. In the first instance (and this is based on personal observation and attendance at some rallies in New York) Billy Graham in his preaching very rarely proclaims the 'good news.' The individual hearer is usually led to believe that the forgiveness of sins is a conditional gift. The New Testament, of course, indicates that there is no 'if' or 'but' connected with this forgiveness. The Lamb of God has taken away the sins of the world, and this includes everyone. Forgiveness is there for the taking. To be sure, the New Testament occasionally uses the imperatives, 'Repent! Believe!' However, these are evangelical imperatives. They were not intended to be an appeal to the human will as though it were capable of making a decision for Christ. The invitations extended in Madison Square Garden appealed to the individual in such a way as to suggest that he could 'with his own reason and strength believe in Jesus Christ and come to Him.'

"In the second instance, there was in the crusade no evidence whatsoever that the evangelist understood the nature of the church as it is described in the New Testament. This, of course, is somewhat related to the normal

Baptist view of the Sacraments. Even apart from this circumstance the listener in Madison Square Garden could in no way get even a glimpse of that people of God with which, as a group, God identifies Himself in His eternal purposes.

"These are serious deficiencies. They need special mention because we hear men saying that Graham's theology is almost Lutheran. It is very definitely not!"

Some of our readers will no doubt raise their eyebrows when they read that Billy Graham was permitted "to address the convention of the Atlantic District of our Synod last summer." That is not all. Pastor Wilfred Bockelman, writing in the *ALC Lutheran Standard* (Nov. 30, 1957) reports that "there were several Missouri Synod congregations that participated" in the highly unionistic Graham Campaign. And Henry E. Hoesman, Director of Evangelism in the ALC, reports in the same issue of the same paper that the congregations of the Missouri Synod which participated in the New York Campaign "supported the entire Billy Graham Crusade to a greater degree than did any of the National Lutheran Council churches." Pastor Hoesman further writes: "I couldn't help wonder why more Lutherans had not participated in the Billy Graham Crusade and its visitation evangelism program. Perhaps some Lutherans decided against cooperating with other denominations because they felt it was unionism. The fact that a number of Missouri Synod congregations did participate ought to pretty well answer whether or not it was grossly unionistic."

How naive! And what offense some Missourians are giving today through conduct that is indeed grossly unionistic! Some of our father's used to say: *Vom Osten kommt das Unheil her!* However, the unionistic leaven which is so strong among Missourians in the east has long since permeated many sectors of our church. Our officials are confronted by a simple and decisive choice. They can, even in this late day, either apply effective evangelical discipline to such unionistic offenses as we are here discussing, such as they are answerable for to us and to God according to Holy Scripture and the Constitution of the Missouri Synod, which is supposed to guarantee us protection against such offenses; or they can let such offense, which is growing from day to day, go on permeating our fellowship and eventually destroy its Scriptural character completely. It is

our right and duty to keep on insisting that they choose the former way.

There is no other way. Any possible supposed third way, a middle-of-the-road policy, of tolerance, of compromise, of ineffectual church politics deemed wise in the wisdom of men, must prove a delusion and a snare.

"If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit!" (Gal. 5, 25.)

If we could but be told that for once proper evangelical discipline has been applied to such cases of offense as the one before us, this would indeed be like a refreshing breeze.

P. H. B.

PASS YOUR COPY OF THE CONFESSIONAL LUTHERAN ON TO SOME FRIEND

✪ The LUTHERAN WITNESS and Racial Intergration

The *Lutheran Witness* not long ago (Oct. 22, 1957) published a full-page article on the situation in Little Rock, Arkansas. From a historical point of view, that is, insofar as the article presents the historic situation in Little Rock by one who lives in the midst of this presently much disturbed scene, the article is well written and of considerable interest. However, the solution of racial difficulties in our country on which it insists is certainly not Scriptural.

The chief question at issue is: Do the Holy Scriptures and Christian love demand integration, — for instance that our flourishing True Light Mission in New York's Chinatown be dissolved and its many members integrated with our white congregations there? How does the article under discussion show that Scripture and Christian love do or do not make such a demand of us? The article doesn't. It simply makes the bald statement: "Christians in Arkansas and everywhere else know that the basic and permanent solution to the problem of integration is found in Holy Scriptures. That solution, in its most simplified form, is contained in the one word *love*." That love is enjoined in Holy Scripture everyone knows and agrees to; this does not have to be proved, and yet it is the only thing the article does take the trouble even to try to

prove, by quoting Holy Scripture with reference to it. The question, we repeat, is simply: Does Christian love demand integration of races under all circumstances? This question the *Lutheran Witness* article simply begs. By which we mean to say, the article naively takes for granted that we are all of us ready to grant to its proponents the false position for which they stand without any proof whatsoever.

This is never the way things are done in any debate. Proponents of a solution to any "problem" in debate must be prepared to prove their point or to yield by default to their opponents who may be more ready and prepared to prove to contrary solution which they propose.

There is another error in the *Lutheran Witness* article, as vicious as the one which we have already alluded to. The article under discussion ends: "Only sacrificial love which reflects Christ's perfect and boundless love can cure the ill localized in Little Rock and alleviate all other ills besetting mankind."

No matter how well meant such a statement may be, it is nevertheless wholly mistaken.

The situation at Arkansas represents a civic problem. To the best of our knowledge the matter at issue is the integration of races in *public (State) schools*. This is a matter for State authorities, not for the Church, to solve. And we believe that the State can resolve such a matter on the basis of the principle of civic righteousness alone, even as many "other ills besetting mankind" have been successfully resolved on such a basis. This is the purpose of government, and God has instituted government, too; not merely the Church.

We may add that the government has in this matter made no demands on the Church so far as we know. It has rightly recognized its own sphere and properly remained within it. Let churches do as much! "The power of the Church and the civil power must not be confounded. The power of the Church has its own commission, to teach the Gospel, and to administer the sacraments. Let it not break into the office of another. . . . Let it not prescribe laws to civil rulers concerning the form of the Commonwealth." (Apology of the Augsburg Confession, Art. XXVIII: 12f.) Not to forget that we can hardly expect folks who do not even want to be Christians (there are

such, and this is their civic right) to submit to Christian principles.

If the *Lutheran Witness* will put the brethren in remembrance of these things it will be a good Lutheran witness and a good servant of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Some of us are getting weary of being classed as second-rate Christians in our own official publications because we do not agree with confused spirits who are shouting from the housetops that racial integration is a religious must for Church and State now that the government of our country has recognized it as a social problem and attempted some solution of it in the civic sphere. We don't like it either that the Church is now being accused, by implication at least, of having been remiss in its duty to teach all the counsel of God and thus to have lived in sin these 1900 years until social gospelites discovered a long-hidden "truth."

Let us ask our officials to put a sudden and sure stop to this tragedy in our church.

P. H. B.

• A Simple Age-Old Truth

"A corruption of the best becomes the worst."

• Chaplains — "Ultimately Withdrawn"

Those two words in quotes in the caption of this article are not mine. They are the words used by the Rev. O. E. Midboe, Washington, D. C., speaking before a Lutheran chaplains' conference during the Lutheran World Federation meeting in Minneapolis. Under the caption 'PAN-PROTESTANTISM in MILITARY SCORED,' the Minneapolis Star of Aug. 22, 1957, reported that the Rev. Midboe found the military chaplaincy anything but satisfactory. As the executive secretary of the National Lutheran Council's Bureau of Service to Military Personnel, Mr. Midboe ought to know what he was talking about. Said the Rev. Midboe: "Many such mixed Protestant services become mere discussions of moral issues with any doctrinal questions carefully side-stepped." His complaint was that "many chaplains have succumbed to military persuasion in regard to merged religious services." He further stated that "some non-Protestant religions

and sects such as Orthodox, Mormon, Moham-medan and Christian Scientist, which want their own Sunday services, are often mixed with Protestants and sometimes receive compulsory PROTESTANT instruction against their will."

It was with regard to what might have to be done if this Pan-Protestant propaganda continued in the chaplaincy that Mr. Midboe replied: "Any church which resists efforts to merge is likely to have its regular quota of chaplains snipped to pieces by the defense department." And when the further question was asked: "What can Lutherans do to combat 'Pan-Protestantism'?" Mr. Midboe replied: "Ultimately withdraw its chaplains from the military service."

Rather shocking words for those who all along have sought to live on the great delusion that there was nothing wrong with the chaplaincy. But they are words which all who take their religion seriously need to bear in mind. It is as true to-day as it was on the day that the outspoken Teddy Roosevelt uttered it: "The most uncomfortable truth is, in the long run, a safer companion than the pleasantest falsehood." And even they who have sought to satisfy themselves with the delusion that the chaplaincy was "perfectly all right" will be given grace ultimately to withdraw if they consider the saving of a *soul* more important than the saving of the *face*.

Norman A. Madson Sr., in *Lutheran Sentinel*.

● Are You Supporting Your Synod As You Should?

In asking the question, Are you supporting your synod as you should? we do not have in mind mere financial support of its organizational structure and its program of external expansion. We rather have in mind just now particularly that which Holy Scripture itself mentions first when it clearly presents the Christian doctrine of the general stewardship of all believers, which is so vital to our personal life and to the corporate life of any and every church, — the stewardship of the *Word*.

There is one express passage in which the General Stewardship of all Christians is clearly set forth in the Bible, and we believe that the rule of faith according to which the Holy Scriptures are to be understood are

the clear passages of the Scriptures themselves which set forth the individual doctrines. (Apology of the Augsburg Confession, Trigl. 441:60; Brief Statement of the Doctrinal Position of the Missouri Synod, Sect. 2.) This classic passage is I Pet. 4, 10-11. Here we read: "As every man hath received the gift" (any divine gift), "even so minister the same one to another" (serve one another with it) "as good *stewards* of the manifold grace of God." Then Holy Scripture mentions first among the gifts over which we are to exercise faithful stewardship, *the Word*: "If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God." Having stated this clear truth, Scripture then proceeds to inculcate the stewardship of Christian service generally in accordance with our God-given abilities or talents, all to the glory of God through Christ our Lord: "If any man minister, let him do it as of the ability which God giveth: that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom be praise and dominion forever and ever. Amen."

Here is the reason why we are asking in all sincerity and earnestness: Are you supporting your synod as you should?

Are you making sure that Synod, its spokesmen, and all of its members are always speaking as the oracles of God? The first object of the Missouri Synod is "the conservation and promotion of the unity of the true faith (Eph. 4, 3-6; I Cor. 1, 10) and a united defense against schism and sectarianism (Rom. 16, 17)." (Constitution, Art. III — Objects, 1.)

To this prime object you have pledged yourself. And this is Christian Stewardship.

That is why we are asking: Are you supporting your synod as you should?

Are you?

Here is a question for the conscience of everyone of us.

P. H. B.

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● Review of Publications

Messages of the Third Assembly. The Lutheran World Federation. 120 pages, 5¾x8½; paper covers. Augsburg Publishing House, Minneapolis. \$1.50.

This official publication contains the Opening Sermon preached at the Third Assembly of the Lutheran World Federation, held in Minneapolis last summer, the Key-note Address on the general theme of the Assembly, "Christ Frees and Unites," the five Lectures on its five Sub-Themes, and its final Theses.

In his Preface to the Theses of this Assembly, Bishop Hans Lilje, speaking as its erstwhile president, says (p. 99): "It is with joy and affection that we think of the fellowship with so many brethren and sisters from all over the world." Such assertions must impress on everyone with any intelligence at all the futility of argumentation by advocates of the LWF that it is not a church, but a federation, in a mistaken effort to induce us to join it.

In his Keynote Address Bishop Lilje stated over and over again: "We are at the point of expressing a confession of our faith." (P. 11.) "Our Assembly as a member of the Christian Church shall confess its faith." (P. 14.) "We desire to make our confession here and now." (P. 14.) "Thus we are to understand the total theme of our Plenary Assembly; it is the attempt (*sic!*) to confess here and now, within this world perplexed by a multitude of questions and anxieties, our faith in the Lord Jesus Christ." So also in the bishop's brief Preface to the Theses of the Assembly: "We desire to affirm our faith." (P. 99.) After all this build-up, Carl E. Lund-Quist, Executive Secretary of the LWF, in his Foreword to the publication, comes before us with this big let-down: "It is our hope that the delegates and official visitors will interpret (*sic!*) the theses and that pastors and laity will engage in lively, vital debate on the questions raised (*sic!*)."

Such is the end of the unionistic road. It reduces everything, no matter how sacred and how certain it may be in itself in its Biblical presentation, to a matter of endless questions; and it loves debate and controversy, — just so matters are left questions, with never a sure answer in sight. That is the happy hunting ground and tumbling ground of Unionism. Here is its essence. This is what goes on at unionistic

assemblies such as those of the LWF. Thus they begin; and thus they end. And it is this way because they are planned this way.

The Theses are written in the best professional jargon of Unionism, which abounds in double-talk and meaningless vanities, — which each may interpret to his own liking. We are tempted to cite example after example. But time is too precious, and the life that is our portion here, too brief for this. Nor would we want to seem to be taking the LWF too seriously at all. The fourth theses of the second subdivision of the convention theme (The Unity of the Church in Christ) woefully confuses the Church proper and its mere outward fellowship, as was done throughout the Assembly, and as is the common practice of unionistic Lutherans. Citing Art. VII of the Augsburg Confession, this thesis falsely avers: "Wherever we hear the Gospel preached in its truth and purity and see the Sacraments administered according to the institution of Christ, there we may be assured that the one Church of Christ is present. There nothing separates us from the brethren, and both faith and love constrain us to overcome our dividedness." I can hear the Gospel read in its purity in a Catholic Church and therefore have the assurance that God has children there (since it is by this alone that faith is begotten and children of God thus born); and yet there is much there to separate me outwardly from my brethren. God has also forbidden outward fellowship under such circumstances. Rom. 16, 17.

How the unity of the Church proper and mere outward union are confused in the Opening Worship Sermon of Bishop Ordass will be seen from the following paragraph (p. 7f): "I want to ask you all to give thanks to Jesus for His gift of unity which He has bestowed on us through faith in Him so that, though we may never have met before, though we may be living under entirely different earthly circumstances, we are nevertheless friends and brothers as members of one body, the universal Church of Christ. And I trust that, driven and encouraged by this awareness, we shall leave this assembly committed to the task of preserving and increasing this unity, so that we may at all times dwell with the Lord."

One must have a badly twisted mind to accept, in Bishop Lilje's Keynote Address, the following fallacy of opposition and its false conclusion (p. 16): "If the Lutheran Church wishes to find her way through the

uncertainties of faith (*sic!*) and through the threat to the existence of present-day man, she must not ask, What is Lutheran? but rather, What is consonant with Christ? For this fundamental reason, the Lutheran Church *can* never appear as the champion of historic confessionalism." The fallacy is carried forward on the following page, where, moreover, the arch-modernist Soederblom is listed among the fathers of the speaker's Lutheran Church, as follows: The Lutheran Church's "task is not the preservation of an historical heritage, but it is the confession here and now of the substance of this heritage." On the other hand, the ultra-modernistic Bultmann is presented in a most favorable and deceptive light by Bishop Lilje when he says (p. 18f): "Even such a critical-scientific exegete as Bultmann can say that the doubts concerning the historical existence of Jesus deserve no refutation." Like most deniers of our faith, at least those who live off of Christian money, Bultmann of course does not deny that Jesus once existed; but he does question the truth of His resurrection and of anything miraculous in his existence! Is that the kind of Christ we need, or want?

On page 47, in the Lecture on Sub Topic Two of the Assembly, the Unity of the Church in Christ, we read the amazing statement: "As Lutherans we ought to know that differences in liturgy or church polity or in the so-called non-theological factors do not permit us to side-step the question of external union on the basis of Articles VII and VIII of the Augsburg Confession — unless there are absolutely compelling reasons why we should do so." Aside from the fact that the speaker immediately takes back with one hand what he had just given with the other as though it were to be for keeps, Art. VII of the Augsburg Confession does not speak at all of "the question of external union." On the contrary, in its corresponding Article of the Apology (VII: 31) the Lutheran Church protests as plain as a neon-sign: "*We are speaking of true, i.e., of spiritual unity.*" Art. VII answers the question: How does one become a member of the One Holy Christian Church? And Art. VIII says no more than that the Word and Sacrament remain effectual even though administered by evil men who (perhaps unknown to us) may be intermingled with the Church's outward fellowship.

The Lecture under discussion confesses no more for the LWF than that "We Lu-

therans claim that our doctrine of the Lord's Supper approaches most closely (*sic!*) the intentions of the Lord." (P. 48.) It, moreover, admits (p. 48f): "We ourselves are today perhaps farther than ever removed from complete agreement on the traditional (*sic!*) doctrine of the Lord's Supper. Today there is at least one Lutheran Church which has reached agreement on the Lord's Supper with its Calvinistic neighbor church [the Church of Denmark and the Church of Scotland are no doubt meant], not to mention various types of 'emergency' intercommunion practiced in diaspora regions or in young churches. There are Lutheran churches [the Church of Sweden] which 'really see no obstacle' to intercommunion with the Anglican Church. Some present-day Lutheran exegetes assert that the Lutheran doctrine of the Lord's Supper as stated in the Confessions does not do full justice to the Biblical witness." All such as are referred to are within the conglomerate church fellowship of the Lutheran World Federation.

In the Lecture on Sub-Topic Three, Freedom to Reform the Church, we read (p. 65): "Especially in the matter of liturgy, as for example in the communion service, the Holy Spirit has given us forms which have proved themselves vital even after a thousand years." It is precisely such teaching that is rejected by the Lutheran Church in Article VII of its Augsburg Confession. It is, moreover, precisely the liturgical forms in the Communion Service which originated under the papacy a thousand years ago and thereabouts that had to be swept out of the Church in the Reformation — if there was to be a Reformation at all. In his Keynote Address, Bishop Lilje had somewhat similarly said (p. 19): "The late Dr. Elert, one of the great teachers of the Lutheran Church, once said that, in the early church only that which was liturgically acceptable was dogmatically acceptable. This means that no doctrinal statement has validity for the church unless it is possible for it to simultaneously fit into the framework of the hymn of praise." It was a monk of the early Middle Ages who first made the remark here attributed to Dr. Elert. And what he said is true of his papal church, — though by no means of the *early* Church. Papal doctrine has always evolved out of Rome's false liturgical devotion. Dr. Eduard Preuss, himself a Romanist, who became a convert to Lutheranism but later again reembraced his original papal faith, has for instance nicely said: "The false doctrines of the Roman Church all

have a like history of development: their beginnings are insignificant and do not lie within the field of dogma, but in that of the cultus or at least of ecclesiastical practice. Their root is a certain piety which is not regulated according to the plumbline of the Word of God." (*The Roman Doctrine of the Immaculate Conception*, German, p. 1.) In the early Church it was turned around. Christian doctrine was both complete (as revealed in Holy Scripture) and accepted before there was any formal liturgy. And so today among true Christians only that which is dogmatically acceptable is liturgical-ly acceptable.

John 10, 16 is misused, unionistically, as though there were not one fold (the *una sancta*, the One Holy Church) and one Shepherd already now: "And so at last, 'there shall be one fold and one Shepherd.'" (P. 55. Cp. also p. 96.) Is it a chiliastic hope that was promulgated at the LWF Assembly? "Chilastically inclined exegetes support their hope of better days with this Word of Christ and enthuse over the prospect that at the end of days all differences among Christians, also differences in confession, will fall by the way and all believers will be united in one visible Church. But the Lord here speaks of unity in the Spirit and in faith. The sheep out of Israel and the sheep out of the Gentiles will in faith cling to the one Shepherd and thus be one with another in faith in Christ. The one fold under the one Shepherd is the *una sancta*, the invisible Church. The Lord here speaks, not of what the final development of the Church is to be and to result in, but of its coming into being (*vom kirchlichen Werden*), which is going on through the whole time of the New Testament. There shall be one fold, *geneesetai*. Through the Shepherd's leading ever more sheep to it from among all Gentile people, through His Word, there comes into being, arises, and grows the one fold. And when the last little sheep, the last elect soul, has been gained, then the number of the fold is full, and then the end is also there." (Geo. Stoeckhardt, *Hom. Mag.*, 22, p. 77.) Certainly, it is a mark of Chiliasm that is expressed in the Lecture on Sub-Topic Five, Free and United in Hope (p. 91), where we read: "It is only when He returns that all nations — also Israel — will be assembled at His holy mountain. Rom. 11, 12ff; Isa. 2, 2-3; Micah 4, 1ff; Mk. 13, 10; cf. Jeremias, *Jesu Verheissung für die Völker*,

1956." Romans 11, 12ff speaks, not of some assembly of the nation of Israel, but of the *saving* of "some of them" which was going on already through the ministration of the great Apostle to the Gentiles (v. 14). Isa. 2, 2-3 and Micah 4, 1ff speak of the establishment and exaltation of "Zion" (the Church) in these "last days" and the streaming of nations unto it which has been going on throughout New Testament times; not of what shall happen *when He returns*. And Mk. 13, 10, too, simply says that "the Gospel must first be published among all nations" before the end comes, as is being done all this while.

Such is the Lutheran World Federation and its fellowship. By their Reports we can know them. And this is their Report. Certainly, the LWF is not the Church of Jesus Christ; nor is it a member of that Church. (Individual members of it may be.) For itself it disavows being a church in any sense of the word at all, although Dr. Lilje, somewhat contradictorally, says that it is a confessing "member of the Christian Church," — which can only refer to outward church fellowship. But the LWF is not a Scriptural confessional fellowship either, — one that is faithfully carrying out Christ's Great Commission to His Church, Mt. 28, 19-29; Rom. 16, 17. Anyone and any church which wish to remain true to the Lord's Commission to His Church will have to avoid the un-Scriptural fellowship of the LWF.

"Say ye not, A confederacy, to all them to whom this people shall say, A confederacy; neither fear ye their fear, nor be afraid. Sanctify the Lord of Hosts Himself; and let Him be your fear, and let Him be your dread. And ye shall be a sanctuary." (Isa. 8, 9-18.)

P. H. B.

● The Danger of Losing the Bible

In an essay on "The Danger of Losing the Bible" before the Northern Illinois District of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, Dr. Martin Graebner said: "The present writer considers unionism a very great menace for our church at the present time. There is no immediate danger of the gross unionism which makes no distinction between Lutheranism, Roman Catholicism, Judaism, and Paganism (remember that this was written in 1934 — F.E.B.), but

there is the danger of a more subtle kind of unionism which begins with silence, that is to say, in the discontinuance of polemics in preaching and writing. A further step is taken when congregations engage non-Lutheran musical talent for the beautification of their services; then to unite with others in charitable undertakings and other works not of a strictly religious character; and now we are already beginning to hear voices which advocate closer relations, not so much with sectarians, but with the members of other Lutheran church bodies. (Today they are no longer only voices, but acts and deeds. — F.E.B.)

"We should here remember that the deplorable condition prevailing in the external Church of God did not come like a violent storm, but began with a gentle drizzle. The slogan was a generation ago: In essentials, unity; in non-essentials, liberty; in all things, charity. Then came the question as to what are the essentials, and what are the non-essentials. One doctrine after the other was placed on the list of non-essentials until today there is but one essential doctrine left: There is a God. (Missouri has since reached a point where the question has been raised, What is a doctrine? reminding us of Pilate's similar question, to escape another predicament: What is truth? — F.E.B.) Let the Lutheran Church be warned. The first point that we yield places us on a downward slippery path. (Forty-Four liberal-minded spirits within the Missouri Synod took care of placing Missouri's feet on such a path in 1945 by insisting on declaring more than one point of doctrine a matter in which agreement is not necessary; according to their own testimony, they were never so much as asked to retract by synodical officials, and their false principles are being diligently put into practice ever since. — F.E.B.) If I am willing to give up a single principle, either of doctrine or of practice as prescribed by the Holy Bible, there is no logical reason why I should not yield a second point and a third. And what a spectacle it will be if the Missouri Synod goes over into the camp of the unionists. We shall soon celebrate the hundredth anniversary of the Saxon immigration of 1839 (remember again, that this was written in 1934 — F.E.B.). These people left Germany, giving up their homes and their future, in order to escape from unionism; and we, their descendants, whom the Lord has blessed, and whom the Lord has made a great nation, should now

permit that very unionism to enter our ranks." To see but a bit of the spectacle that we today have in the Missouri Synod, see, for instance, "An Open Letter" by Dr. O. A. Geiseman in the *American Lutheran* for July, 1957, and "Vapor Trails" by Martin H. Scharlemann of St. Louis in the *Lutheran Chaplain*, November, 1957.

FRED E. BARTLING.

● A Protest Against High Church Lutheranism

On the "Readers' Response" pages of the Michaelmas (Vol. XIV, No. 4) issue of the Lutheran high church publication *Una Sancta* there appeared a letter from a convert from the Episcopal Church (Geo. Porthan), from which we quote an excerpt or two, to show the extent of this Romanizing movement in which Missourians have part.

"The Easter, 1957, issue of *Una Sancta* proved too protestant for my Lutheran tastes — that is, if the definition of a radical protestant is one who insists that his peculiar doctrinal emphases *must* be accepted by the whole 'Catholic' Church. I refer especially to the 'Credo Ecclesiam' article. This particular article is as Lutheran as Pius XII. . . . I love incense (used in processions ONLY) and chasubles, but when it comes to choosing between *them* and solid devotion, I choose the latter. But the 'Credo Ecclesiam' article I could not bear. In all charity, it makes me weep to see such a divisive influence among Lutherans, and in such a fine 'ethos' as the deacon-brotherhouse movement. God spare us from Romanizing influences. As a convert from the Episcopal Church, I know the sad tale of Anglo-Catholicism. Brilioth to the contrary, Anglicanism is not richer because of them — her spiritual poverty is appalling, and she has become, because of the Anglo-Catholics, a church of Beautiful Emptiness. God save us from that. Please cancel my subscription. Fifty cents is enclosed to pay for the one issue."

It is interesting to note this revolt against *Una Sancta* "Lutheranism" even by one who was schooled in Anglicanism. Wouldn't it be refreshing to see something like that come from an *official* Missourian source?

P. H. B.

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MOTTO: Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment. — 1 Cor. 1, 10.

We have no intention of yielding sight of the eternal, immutable truth of God for the sake of temporal peace, tranquillity, and unity (which, moreover, is not in our power to do). Nor would such peace and unity, since it is devised against the truth and for its suppression, have any permanency. Still less are we inclined to adorn and conceal a corruption of the pure doctrine and manifest, condemned errors. But we entertain heartfelt pleasure and love for, and are on our part sincerely inclined and anxious to advance, that unity according to our utmost power, by which His glory remains to God uninjured, nothing of the divine truth of the Holy Gospel is surrendered, no room is given to the least error, poor sinners are brought to true, genuine repentance, raised up by faith, confirmed in new obedience, and thus justified and eternally saved alone through the sole merit of Christ." — Concluding Statement of the Formula of Concord concerning the requirements of Confessional Fellowship among Lutherans of the Augsburg Confession. Trigl. Conc., p. 1095.

"It has been our purpose . . . that all unlawful, doubtful, suspicious, and condemned doctrines, wherever and in whatever books they may be found, and whoever may have written them, or even now may be disposed to defend them, might be expressly, distinctly repudiated, so that every one may be faithfully warned against the errors, which are spread here and there in the writings of some theologians, and no one be misled in this matter by the reputation (authority) of any man." — Formula of Concord (Thorough Declaration), Comprehensive Summary; Trigl. Conc., P. 857.

"These highly important matters (the business of religion) concern also the common people and laymen (as they are called), inasmuch as they are Christians, must for their salvation distinguish between pure and false doctrine." — Formula of Concord (Thorough Declaration), Comprehensive Summary; Trigl. Conc., P. 853.

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● Concern for Pure Doctrine

Christ Himself has described the way to heaven as a narrow path. Just so narrow is the path of the pure doctrine. For the pure doctrine is nothing else than the doctrine regarding the way to heaven. It is easy to lose your way when it is narrow, rarely

traveled, and leads through a dense forest. Without intending to do so and without being aware of it, you may make a wrong turn to the right or left. It is equally easy to lose the narrow way of the pure doctrine, which likewise is traveled by few people and leads through a dense forest of erroneous teachings. You may land either in the bog of

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"As soon as we look more to our synod than to the invisible **kingdom of God**, the kingdom of grace and salvation, we begin to be a **sect**. For this is really the essence of sectarianism that one has his eye on his little fellowship above all, even though the kingdom of God may suffer harm thereby." "That preacher is no true preacher who merely seeks to fanaticize his congregation for the Lutheran Church, or for the Missouri Synod, or, worse still, only for the Iowa District. Such men are bad preachers. They must rather direct people to Christ and say: See, we preach the pure Word of God, in which the everlasting Gospel of Christ is continued; that is why you should adhere to us, and therefore we say, Leave us as soon as we no longer do this! For salvation by no means depends on us, nor also on the Missouri Synod. So if it no longer preaches the pure Word of God, then it is worthy of nothing but that one forsake it." — Dr. C. F. W. Walther, "Concerning the Chief Obligations Which a Synod Has if it Rightly Wants to Bear the Name of an Evangelical Lutheran Synod." Doctrinal Essay at the First Convention of the Iowa District of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, 1879; Proceedings, pp. 112, 114.

fanaticism or in the abyss of rationalism. This is no jest. False doctrine is poison to the soul. An entire banqueting party drinking from cups containing an admixture of arsenic can drink physical death from its cups. So an entire audience can invite spiritual and eternal death by listening to a sermon that contains an admixture of the poison of false doctrine. A person can be deprived of his soul's salvation by a single false comfort or a single false reproof administered to him. [For instance, by the common misuse of Art. VII of the Augsburg Confession as though all who use the outward marks of the Church are members of the Body of Christ, the *una sancta*, the Communion of Saints. P.H.B.] This is all the more easy because we are all more easily accessible to the shining and dazzling light of human reason than to the divine truth. For "the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them." I Cor. 2, 14.

From what has been said you can gather how foolish it is, yea, what an awful delusion has taken hold on so many men's minds who ridicule the pure doctrine and say to us: "Ah, do cease clamoring, Pure doctrine! Pure doctrine! That can only land you in dead orthodoxy. Pay more attention to pure life, and you will raise a growth of genuine Christianity." This is exactly like saying to a farmer: "Do not worry forever about good seed; worry about good fruits." Is not a farmer properly concerned about good fruit when he is solicitous about getting good seed? Just so a concern about pure doctrine is the proper concern about genuine Christianity and a sincere Christian life. False doctrine is noxious seed, sown by the enemy to produce a progeny of wickedness. The pure doctrine is wheat-seed; from it spring the children of the Kingdom, who even in the present life belong in the kingdom of Jesus Christ and in the life to come will be received into the Kingdom of Glory. May God even now implant into your hearts a great fear, yea, a real abhorrence, of false doctrine! May He graciously give you a holy desire for the pure, saving truth, revealed by God Himself.

Walther, *The Proper Distinction between Law and Gospel*, translated by W. H. T. Dau, p. 20f.

❶ "A Fine, Clumsy Distinction"

The Lutheran Church has confessed in its Augsburg Confession, Art. VII, that spiritual unity with the One Holy Christian Church, the great invisible Communion of Saints, the mystic Body of Christ, is brought about solely through the right teaching of the Gospel and the proper administration of the Sacraments; that this is not accomplished through rites and ceremonies instituted by men.

To this the Roman Catholic Church has objected that this is true of particular rites, but not of universal rites, that is, rites universally accepted in the Catholic Church pursuant to the decisions of its councils and popes. (The Roman Catholic Confutation, Art. VII.)

Whereupon the Lutheran Church replied (Apology, Art. VII:31): "That is a fine, clumsy distinction! We do not sufficiently understand what the adversaries mean. We are speaking of true, i.e., of spiritual unity (we say that those are one harmonious Church who believe in one Christ; who have one Gospel, one Spirit, one faith, the same Sacraments; and we are speaking, therefore, of spiritual unity), without which faith in the heart, or righteousness of heart before God, cannot exist. For this we say that dissimilarity of human rites, whether universal or particular, is not necessary, because the righteousness of faith is not a righteousness bound to certain traditions (outward ceremonies of human ordinances) as the righteousness of the Law was bound to the Mosaic ceremonies, because this righteousness of the heart is a matter that quickens the heart. To this quickening, human traditions, whether they be universal or particular, contribute nothing; neither are they effects of the Holy Ghost, as are chastity, patience, the fear of God, love to one's neighbor, and the works of love."

Today, unionistic churchmen among us have invented a supposed important "distinction" between outward prayer fellowship and mere joint prayer that can well serve their peculiar purpose. We are sure that our Lutheran fathers would likewise say of such a distinction: "That is a fine, clumsy distinction! We do not sufficiently understand what the adversaries mean." That there is no true spiritual unity or fellowship (the unity of the One Holy Christian Church) when unionists pray together, that they may actually be pray-

ing against each other when joining in one and the same words, we well understand. But we are now speaking of external, outward, confessional fellowship. And here we say that when there is joint prayer, there is prayer fellowship. These are one and the same. There is no escaping righteous condemnation and rejection of such false outward fellowship, no matter what unionists and indifferentists may label it, and however much they may confuse and offend the weak by such a "fine, clumsy distinction." This "distinction" belongs to the "good words and fair speeches" by which some men, regardless of what their intentions may or may not finally be, serve their own interests, and not our Lord Jesus Christ. It is part and parcel of the cause of the unionistic divisions and offenses among us contrary to the doctrine which we have learned, and must be avoided as its persistent proponents themselves eventually must be. (Rom. 16, 17-18.)

P. H. B.

❷ Defining Christian Stewardship

We recently received a sample blurb from the Department of Stewardship of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (Pledge Estimator) which contained the following definition of Christian Stewardship on its back cover: "Christian Stewardship is the practice of systematic and proportionate giving of time, abilities, and material possessions based on the conviction that these are a trust from God, to be used in His service for the benefit of all mankind in grateful acknowledgement of Christ's redeeming love."

We still prefer the *Scriptural* definition of the general stewardship of Christians, which is given in I Peter 4, 11: "If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God; if any man minister (serve), let him do it as of the ability which God giveth."

Luther emphasized the importance of correct definitions. If our definition of any doctrine is faulty, our whole teaching and practice concerning it will be askew.

And so we say also that we still prefer Scripture's definition of the general stewardship of Christians to the many too limited definitions (definitions *do* define; that is, they set limits and bounds to the subject defined, either rightly or wrongly) which have become the order of the day in modern churches and church programs.

We always shall prefer Scripture's own definition, which is so simple and clear — and of course absolutely correct — that it cannot be improved upon.

Why not ask our church to operate with this definition — especially in our "Stewardship" departments?

P. H. B.

● Good Stewardship

Christian people are responsible for two things: for the preservation of the truth and for the diffusion of the truth.

● An Idle Dream

"Dream not that worldlings will admire you, or that the more holy and the more Christ-like you are, the more peaceably people will act towards you."

Spurgeon (*Morning and Evening Daily Readings*)

PASS ON YOUR COPY OF THE CONFESSIONAL LUTHERAN TO SOME FRIEND

● A Revealing Questionnaire in the American Lutheran Church

"At the recent ALC Brotherhood convention in Minneapolis a questionnaire was circulated among the men to test their knowledge of the church as well as to get their attitudes on certain teachings in the church. Part of that questionnaire is published on the next page." *Lutheran Standard*, Nov. 16, 1957, p. 10.

The *Lutheran Standard* continues its preliminary comment, which we quote in part: "The men who attended the Minneapolis convention go to church quite regularly: 238 said they go to church every Sunday, 13 go twice a month, two go once a month, and none go less frequently than that . . ."

"The great majority of Brotherhood men hold theological beliefs that would be labeled conservative. For instance, 168 said they believe the Bible to be the Word of God, *absolutely without error*; 59 said that while

the Bible is the Word of God and is infallible as far as making plain the way of salvation, it may, nevertheless, have a few minor errors, particularly in some of the geographical and historical data in the Old Testament. Not so many years ago probably fewer than a dozen persons would have held this latter view." (Emphasis in original.)

The Opinion Poll

The opinion poll, with tabulated results, is given on p. 11 of this issue of the *Lutheran Standard*. It is preceded by this note: "Approximately 250 men attending the recent Brotherhood convention answered this questionnaire. The figures in parentheses indicate the number of men who gave that answer. Inasmuch as not all the questions were answered, the totals are different."

We reproduce several items from the questionnaire, especially those items which may serve to give an insight into the doctrinal situation among ALC laymen:

"I have (208) have not (47) been a Lutheran all my life.

"I feel that I could (190) could not (32) explain the difference between the Lutheran Church and other denominations.

"I feel that the Lutheran Church is too narrow minded. Yes (19) No (227).

The Bible

"The Bible is the Word of God and is, therefore, *absolutely without error* (168); is the Word of God, but while it is infallible as far as making plain the way of salvation, it may have a few minor errors, particularly in some of the geographical and historical data in the Old Testament (59).

"I believe that I am saved because Christ died for my sins (224); because I try my best to lead a good life, do what is right, and although I make mistakes, I trust that my good deeds will outweigh my bad deeds (21).

"I believe that Jesus Christ was true God and true man (241); was the best man and the greatest teacher who ever lived but was not God (5).

"I regard the virgin birth of Christ as something that actually happened (245); something that probably did not happen (3).

"I believe that the miracles in the Bible actually happened (241); that they were stories that need not necessarily be factual, but that, nevertheless, illustrate a great truth (7).

"The Bible teaches that the earth is about 6,000 years old (130); gives no indication about how old the earth is (77).

"I personally believe the earth is about 6,000 years old (121); is probably more than a million years old (70).

Merger Opinion

"Which two of the following bodies are currently engaged in merger negotiations with the American Lutheran Church: the *United Lutheran Church* (73); the *Missouri Synod* (6); the *Evangelical Lutheran Church* (212); the *National Lutheran Council* (10); the *United Evangelical Lutheran Church* (182); the *Swedish Lutheran Church* (9). Correct answers: Evangelical Lutheran Church and United Evangelical Lutheran Church.

"I am in favor of the merger as it is now being planned (214); I would prefer to wait two (14), five (10); ten (0); or fifteen (0) years if by waiting that long the merger could include the United Lutheran Church or the Missouri Synod or both." (Emphasis in the *Lutheran Standard*.)

A Sad State of Affairs

The questionnaire quoted above reveals a sad state of affairs among the laity of the ALC. The men who answered it were delegates to the convention of the Brotherhood of the American Lutheran Church. They certainly represent the active laymen of that church body. They might well be considered the cream of ALC laity. They attend church regularly and profess loyalty to the Lutheran name. And yet the touchstone questions of the questionnaire reveal a substantial departure from Biblical, Lutheran doctrine on the part of the ALC laymen.

One out of four of these laymen believe that the Bible contains errors. The view safeguarded in ALC confessional documents advocated by men like the late Dr. Mattes at Wartburg Seminary, and promulgated at numerous seminars and conferences, has seeped down into the ranks of the laity until it has made rationalists out of many of them. The work of blind leaders is blinding the laity.

Lutherans of the Synodical Conference should be warned by this. They should be satisfied with nothing less, in a document of agreement with the American Lutheran Church, than a clear and specific statement to the effect that the Bible contains no errors,

also not in historical and geographical data. The *Brief Statement* contains such a clear statement, and is therefore very much up-to-date and adequate in defense of the truth. The *Common Confession*, although adopted by the Missouri Synod and the American Lutheran Church, lacked this specific defense of an errorless Bible; and did not, and does not to this day, ward off the false teaching specifically held within the ALC to the effect that the Bible contains "errors, particularly in some of the geographical and historical data." Where are those leading voices in the Missouri Synod now, who, lo these many years, have been asserting (and the assertion was always without proof) that the ALC has been straightened out on the doctrine of an errorless Bible?

About one out of twelve of these laymen of the ALC believe that they are saved by "good deeds" and "a good life" rather than by faith in Christ. A rather high proportion of professed heathen.

More than one in three of the ALC laymen believe that the earth "is probably more than a million years old." The intrusion of evolutionism is another symptom of the deep-rooted shakiness of Christian faith in a church body ridden with doctrinal laxity.

The overwhelming vote, among these ALC laymen, in favor of immediate merger "as it is now being planned" indicates that the job of "conditioning" the laity has been quite thoroughly accomplished. All opposition has undergone a "softening up" process. There is to be no delay. The stampede is on.

A. V. K.

● That ALC Questionnaire

We want to urge our readers to read carefully the article of a colleague on "A Revealing Questionnaire in the American Lutheran Church."

To us, the most salient facts brought to light by the questionnaire as reported and commented on in the *ALC Lutheran Standard* itself are the following:

1) We have known all the while that fundamentally false views such as assertion of error in the Scriptures were taught by Dr. Reu and other ALC leaders, and that these have been safeguarded in every document, inclusive of the so-called *Common Confession*, to which the ALC has ever been ready to

accept as a basis for fellowship with the Missouri Synod. (Pulpit and altar fellowship is all that the ALC admits striving for, its frequently voiced conviction being that prayer fellowship and fellowship in church work is already being freely practiced with it by Missourians.) But we would not have believed, without proper evidence, that the false leaven of its leaders has already leavened its laity to the extent revealed by the questionnaire circulated among its Brotherhood at its last convention: "59 said that while the Bible is the Word of God and is infallible as far as making plain the way of salvation, it may nevertheless, have a few minor errors, particularly in some of the geographical and historical data in the Old Testament. . . . Five denied that Jesus was divine, granting that He was the greatest man who ever lived, while 241 accepted Christ as true God and true man. . . . Three denied the Virgin Birth of Christ, and seven thought that the stories about miracles need not necessarily be true. Despite all Lutheran emphasis on the doctrine that we are saved by the grace of God alone, 21 of those at the convention still believed that they were saved because their good deeds outweighed their bad deeds. . . . Seventy men said the earth was probably more than a million years old."

2) In the *Lutheran Standard's* own comment on the results of the questionnaire there is an admission as to how fast the American Lutheran Church has been going down hill within recent years. (Its position was bad enough to start with!) "Not so many years ago probably fewer than a dozen persons would have held this latter view" now held by 59 of 227 of its members, that the Bible contains errors. "Twenty or thirty years ago" (the American Lutheran Church was organized in 1930) the number believing in a 6,000-year-old earth would quite probably have been larger" than the 121 of 191 members who still hold to that belief. We also regard as very naive the "only" in such statements as "Only five denied that Jesus was divine. . . . Only three denied the Virgin Birth of Christ."

3) The summary evaluation of the questionnaire by the *Lutheran Standard*, contained in the last paragraph of its report, in typical ALC fashion, is no more committal than follows: "What was the value of the questionnaire? Among other things it proved a good device for focusing attention on some important matters of Christian faith and life. It found an enthusiastic response among the

men, and many asked for copies so that they might submit a similar questionnaire to their local Brotherhood. The men became conscious of the necessity of reviewing their strengths and their weaknesses. This could well become a first step toward a better informed and more dedicated laity." All but the initiated are left to wonder just what, in the estimation of the *Lutheran Standard*, are the strengths and weaknesses concerning important matters of Christian faith involved, and just what accordingly might be done toward a better informed and more dedicated laity.

No wonder the American Lutheran Church is ready to join almost any other Protestant fellowship (so far as this has not already been done) just so long as its own peculiar indifferent and unionistic position is safeguarded. And with such a fellowship advocates of the Common Confession and clamorous liberal spirits generally in our midst would have us make common cause!

God forbid!

P. H. B.

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⊕ What the Unity of the Church Depends On

"The unity of the Church does not depend on compression into one organization, but on all its parts being clustered around Jesus." — Alexander Maclaren, *Expositions of Holy Scripture*, Rev. 1, 9-20 (p. 150).

⊕ Doubtful if RSV Bible Will Supplant King James Version

By Louis Cassels

WASHINGTON (UP)—When the Revised Standard Version of the Bible was published five years ago, there was widespread expectation that it would supplant the King James Version as the basic Bible of American Protestants.

The "RSV" has been a phenomenal success. More than five million copies have been

sold, and it is still on the best-seller lists. Scholars have acclaimed it. Tests have shown it easier to read and understand. On its fifth anniversary, the RSV is already firmly established as the best of all modern translations, an invaluable aid to any serious student of the Scriptures.

But it has NOT taken the place of the 346-year-old King James Bible. And it begins to seem doubtful that it will ever do so.

The King James Version still outsells the RSV by a ratio of about 8 to 1. And the RSV share of total Bible sales has shown a tendency to decline rather than increase in the last two years.

Current sales figures are not, of course, conclusive. The National Council of Churches, sponsor of the RSV, recognized from the start that it would take a long time for any new translation to rival the long-loved King James in popular acceptance.

Clergy, Scholars First

It assumed that the swing to the RSV would begin with clergymen and other Bible scholars qualified to compare the two translations, and that the Bible-buying public would eventually follow suit.

This assumption recently received a rude jolt in the form of a survey conducted by the Living Church, weekly Protestant Episcopal magazine.

The magazine polled more than 400 Episcopal clergymen whose names were taken at random from a denominational roster. It asked them which version or versions of the Bible they customarily used for public worship, for private reading, for sermon texts, for serious study of scriptural passages.

The responses showed that the RSV was very highly regarded as a reference, and that it surpassed all other modern translations combined in favor as a "second Bible."

But it was also clear, the Living Church reported, that "the RSV is not by any means taking the place of the King James," even in a denomination which has been notably sympathetic to the new translation.

For example, 262 clergymen said they "always" read from the King James Version at public worship, compared to only 32 who regularly use the RSV as a pulpit Bible. The rest use both versions for worship, but the vast majority — 109 — "usually" choose the King James.

Lopsided Favorite

The old translation was similarly a lopsided favorite for private devotional reading, for sermon quotations and texts.

The one question on which the RSV won a majority was: "What version do you use for serious study of Holy Scripture?" The responses indicated that the average clergyman often consults several translations, including the original Greek, in serious Bible study; but if only one Bible is used, it is more likely to be the RSV than the King James.

The magazine said the reasons given by a majority of Episcopal ministers for their choice of Bibles were well summarized in these two replies:

"I trust the scholarship of the RSV, and therefore I rely quite heavily on it for accurate translation. However, as sacred scripture for the use of the people, the RSV loses much that only the King James Version has — the dignity and beauty of great prose; familiarity and the warmth which that familiarity can give; the tremendous wealth of biblical reference, allusion and quotation which pervades the English language, all of which comes from the King James."

"Unless the meaning of a particular scriptural passage is actually obscured in the King James Version, I use it because its beautiful language still has hallowed associations for this generation of Christians, which are not to be taken lightly."

(The above, inclusive of the heading, appeared in the *Cedar Rapids Gazette* (Iowa) on Nov. 30, 1957.)

• Comparative Bible Sales

In a recent issue of the *Chicagoland Bible News*, published by the Chicago Bible Society, figures were released concerning the sale of various Bibles in its bookstore. Its figures, the article ("Everyman's Book") says, "are no attempt to prove any point, but rather to indicate that the Holy Spirit of God seems to use many versions and many translations to reveal Jesus Christ effectively to people." The figure for the period covered are as follows: King James Version, 10,399; Revised Standard Version, 508. Testaments: King James Version, 14,905; RSV, 317. Portions: KJV, 95,584; RSV, 3. Other translations: 385 Bibles and Testaments; 2,545 portions. (At least some of the latter are foreign language translations.)

We have, since first studying the modernistic RSV at the time of its publication, expressed our conviction that well informed Christians will reject that version, which is nothing more nor less than an attempt to popularize the results of unbelieving higher criticism. Everything that has occurred since in the realm of Bible news has but served to confirm that conviction. All the pressure of National Council Churchism and its propaganda for its version of Scripture, at a cost of millions of dollars, has not been able to change things; and it will not change them.

But Modernists never give up. You can look for another attempt on its part at revising the Bible before too long.

To be forewarned is to be forearmed.

P. H. B.

● Concerning Modernism's Demand for a New Interpretation of Scripture

"It is certainly true that the Scripture needs a new interpretation after having passed through the purgatory of modern criticism." — David Hedegard, *Ecumenism and the Bible*, p. 62.

● Majestic Music of the King James

Paul K. Jewett

On the eve of the release of the Revised Standard Version, Lowell Thomas, eminent news commentator, read excerpts from the Prophet Isaiah in the King James version and added — prophetically — "Pretty hard to beat." Time has confirmed his judgment. The older version, like "ol' man river, he jus' keeps rollin' along."

It is easy to answer that the masses are prejudiced in favor of the old and suspicious of the new. But the King James itself had to begin as a lowly new version, pelted with charges of "bad theology, bad scholarship, and bad English." It appeared without trumpet blast or public proclamation; it waged a running battle with the Geneva Bible for half a century and in this time completely took the field on the strength of its superior merit alone. In contrast to this the American revisers combined the advantage of organized sponsorship in high ecclesiastical places with access to a more accurate critical text, better

scholarly equipment to understand Greek and Hebrew, and the lesson of the American Standard Version, "strong in Greek, weak in English." And yet for all this, the King James, Gulliver-like, with its Lilliputian burden of colons and commas, verse and chapter divisions, is walking off with the victory. Why is this so? One reason that overshadows all others, it would seem, is the vastly superior literary quality of the older version. The King James is a work of art, the Revised Standard a compendium of scholarship; the one is literature, the other reading material.

To many, the element of literary excellence may seem inconsequential. Was not the New Testament written in vernacular Greek? Is not the Bible the book of the masses, and what do common people care about poetry? Anyway, our concern should be with the content of revealed truth, not its literary form.

Unconvincing Plea

I think these arguments are specious. It is true that the Greek of the New Testament is common Greek and in many of the books destitute of literary embellishment. But why should we not rejoice in the fact that the Bible in our mother tongue excels the original as literature? If the New Testament was written in the silver age of Greek and the King James in the golden age of English, is it not all Providence? The apostolic Christians worshipped in crypts and sand pits. Should we then tear down our cathedrals and seal up our organs?

Although it is a most significant feature of our Protestant heritage that the Bible is the book of the common man, to suppose that he is so circumscribed by the mundane realm of factual existence that he never breathes the rare atmosphere of poetry is an error as egregious as it is common. As Louis Untermeyer once observed, in *A Treasury of Great Poems*, we cannot escape poetry. To call an orange *Sunkist*, to name a melon *Honeydew*, capitalizes the power of poetry for the man in the street.

True, accuracy of thought is of paramount importance, yet we should never forget that men feel as well as understand, and what they understand with feeling they understand best. Here the incomparable literary quality of the King James, the music mingled with the meaning, is without a rival in its evocative power. The multitudes who never give a serious moment to literary analysis hear the majestic music of the King James as surely

as the scholar — more surely than some Hebrew and Greek scholars.

How out of touch some scholars can be with this dimension is shown in the way the revisers translated Paul's hymn to love (I Corinthians 13). Love is the most beautiful thing in all the world, and with unerring literary instinct the King James translators have convinced us of this by giving us a supremely beautiful translation of this passage. The revisers, on the other hand, have left it a literary shambles. The same may be said of the unbelievable freedom with which they have handled the Psalter. Recognized as the peak of sacred poetry, with language exquisitely rich and resonant, the Psalter has not only been altered but ruined. In the King James we have poetry printed, unfortunately, as prose; but in the R.S.V. we have prose printed as poetry. Says Dorothy Thompson ("The Old Bible and the New," *Ladies' Home Journal*, March, 1953):

I have tried to read the new Bible with an open mind, and without prejudice, indeed with humility and with respect for so great an effort. . . . But I am compelled to say that I find the new text inferior on nearly every page to the one it seeks to supplant and for reasons that I think I can define. It is weaker, less vivid, defective in imagery, less beautiful and less inspired. And I, at least, do not find it easier to understand.

But someone may still persist that the King James, beautiful as it is, is absolutely wrong in many places. This is undoubtedly true. The finest gems have flaws and there may be sand in the marble of the Parthenon. But shall we tear down the whole edifice for the sake of a few stones? This procedure becomes highly impracticable when we consider that those who have the wit to raze the old lack the genius to remake it.

But someone else will say that, though the King James is not hopelessly corrupt, it is fast becoming archaic. Since language is constantly changing, it is only a matter of time till the venerable version of our fathers takes its place on the shelf with Chaucer. Now this may happen, but if it does no one but the devil can contemplate it with glee. Our King James Bible is not a dispensable luxury of our English Protestant heritage. It is rather a part of us; it has permeated our culture in warp and woof; it is fused with our literature, our liturgy, our hymnody. Our situation is quite different in this respect from that of

our Roman Catholic neighbors. All that Rome had to do to replace the Douay New Testament in 1941 was to announce its successor, an unwitting testimony to the negligible place of the Bible in the piety of its devotees. As a commonwealth changes the color of its automobile plates, so they changed their Bible. But fortunately we as Protestants have not the machinery to expedite such a change, nor is the biblical orientation of our piety so superficial that it can easily sustain such a macromutation.

Role of New Version

Why then labor to bring new versions to the birth? What do we gain but an overpopulation of inferior species? The private modern-speech translations of individual scholars are most stimulating and edifying (e.g., Phillip's *Letters to Young Churches*), but we have nothing to gain and everything to lose by multiplying *versions*, which claim the official sanction of the church as a whole. The first effort of 1886 and 1901 split the British and American churches and, had it succeeded, would have given the English-speaking church two vastly inferior Bibles in the place of one good one. And now with the R.S.V. we have in the American church three Bibles, even as the medieval church had three pontiffs during the Great Schism. If we multiply our Bibles as we have multiplied our denominations, we will only confuse people the more and psychologically, if not theoretically, undermine their sense of the authority of Scripture. The common man always speaks in the singular of THE BIBLE, which is no mere phonetic accident, but an unerring instinct. Variety is not always the spice of life. We need several Bibles about as much as the Roman Church needs several popes. If we are serious about ecumenicity, we would do well to preserve the one thing we really have in common, i.e., our King James Bible. We therefore conclude that the King James *ought* not, even as it *cannot*, be replaced.

But the question still remains, what to do. Even if we grant that our age has not the creative powers to produce a worthy successor to the version inherited from our fathers; even if we say with all conviction, like the man who tasted old wine and refused the new, that we are standing by our King James Bible; will our King James stand by us? Will not time, whose art turns all things to dust, take it from us as surely as the weather will carry the mountains into the sea? Though as

literature it will abide forever, from the perspective of the centuries can it endure as a vehicle of revelation for the common man?

We have come to a point where one must speak as an expert, or risk the role of a dilettante. But not to speak at all would end the discussion, as some modern plays end, leaving the frustrated spectator to supply his own denouement. Let us then address ourselves further to this question.

Theoretically it is true that no version can endure forever, but this is no reason for sitting on our hands. The fate of the King James a million years from now has no more bearing for us than the second law of thermodynamics for the current price of real estate. Had we expended half the scholarly energy in saving the King James that we have spent in efforts to supplant it, we should have come a long way on the path to a solution.

The first and most obvious thing that needs to be done is to modernize the physical form of our received Bible. It is common knowledge that the King James has undergone such revision in the past. In 1613, just two years after the original printing, a second edition appeared with more than four hundred variations. Other revisions occurred in 1629 and 1638 and in 1762. In 1769 the Oxford edition appeared with much modernization of spelling and punctuation. It is almost unbelievable, but true, that this is the current form of the text. In nearly two hundred years we have hardly converted a colon to a semicolon. Why is this? Do we believe that God wrote the King James with His finger on tables of stone? If we can give up inspired Hebrew vowel points and Holy Ghost Greek, must we canonize the commas of the King James? Why could not an ecumenical committee of experts, working jointly in England and America, solve this problem to the satisfaction of all? If a King James version, word for word as it now appears, were to be given a new form to this limited extent, it surely seems that the archaic punctuation would surrender its dominance to the new.

Having leaped this hurdle, the next step might be to cast the poetry as poetry and the prose as prose, giving the latter the form of the modern paragraph rather than the present chapter and verse arrangement. Even the most rabid defenders of the King James admit that our chapter and verse divisions are not inspired.

Though long overdue, the changing of actual words should wait till these less contro-

versial alterations have generally ingratiated themselves with the people as a whole. Perhaps marginal notes could be used to prepare readers gradually where usage is becoming archaic or the text is quite different from the best MSS evidence. In any event, when the changes are made, the task should be approached as one for experts in English primarily and only secondarily for Hebrew and Greek specialists. In other words, if in the mind of those best able to judge, a given usage has become archaic, then let the experts in English choose a new word or phrase, in consultation with those who know best what the Hebrew and Greek actually says. Under no circumstances should many such changes be made in a given generation, and rarely, if ever, should a change be made in those areas affecting received literary parlance or the common idiom of personal piety and public worship. Every literate person knows, for example, what the expression "God forbid" means. There is, therefore, no excuse for changing this to "let it not be" or "by no means." The same goes for "plow with my heifer," "skin of my teeth," "whited sepulchre," and the like. As for the idiom of personal and public piety, the decision of the American revisers of 1901 to substitute "Jehovah" for "Lord" was a blunder for which there can be no other word than crude. To delete from the Bible the most common name of deity in our language and insert "Jehovah" was enough, in itself, to doom their effort. The recent revisers had the good sense to go back to "Lord" in the Old Testament. One could wish that they had restored the Lord's Prayer in Matthew 6 to its common form. We are pleading, then, for principles of translation, that not even the architects of the R.S.V. have been able altogether to ignore. The advantages of a procedure along the lines outlined above are obvious. First, by pursuing such a course we would, first of all, preserve our King James version, the greatest version of the Bible ever achieved. In the second place, we would bequeath it to our children in a form that would enable them to hear the Word of God in language not only meaningful but magnificent.

(Reprinted with the publisher's permission from *Christianity Today*, Nov. 26, 1956. Published Fortnightly by Today's Publications, Inc., 1014 Washington Building, Washington 5, D. C. \$5.00 per year; single copy, 25 cts. — We are happy to see this up-to-date appraisal of the literary excellency of the King James Version as compared with the

RSV and want to add again that the King James Version infinitely surpasses the RSV also with respect to faithful rendering of the content of the original Scriptures. We have of course not given up "inspired Hebrew vowel points" since the Hebrew vowel points found in our Bibles are not part of the original text of the Old Testament at all but the work of Massoretic scholars of the 7th century for facilitating the reading of the text. Our own critical appraisal of the RSV appeared in the March-April-May, 1953, issues of the *Confessional Lutheran*. [Copies may still be ordered from the *Confessional Lutheran*, Box 27, Morrison, Ill. Enclose 25c a copy.] Time has already shown that the RSV is failing to make the grade as over against the AV, — despite the unprecedented promotional efforts of its sponsors. — P.H.B.)

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● **Recent Testimony
Concerning the RSV**

An appraisal of the RSV Old Testament by the noted scholar Oswald T. Allis appeared in the July 8 issue of *Christianity Today*. Introducing the article, Dr. Allis says: "Months before its publication in 1952 the Revised Standard Version (RSV) was widely advertised as 'the greatest Bible news in 341 years.' This decidedly ambitious claim has yet to find general acceptance. Whether the RSV will find permanent and widespread success still remains to be seen. For good reasons many are not ready to accept it as the rightful heir of the historic Authorized Version of 1611 (AV)."

Dr. Allis then sets forth such reasons on several pages which are well documented and irrefutable. In conclusion Dr. Allis says: "The writer is not one of those who regard the Authorized Version as sacrosanct. It is not infallible and where it is wrong it should be corrected. But such revision, if it is to be entitled to the name, should be completely in the spirit of that time-honored version. It should aim to conserve its style and diction and make as few changes in it as are consistent with the accuracy and lucidity of the translation. We believe it to be imperative

that conservative scholars prepare a revision of the AV that will carefully conserve all that is best in it while seeking to eliminate its occasional obscurities and errors. The AV has been for centuries a great unifying factor in the life of English-speaking Protestantism. Long may it remain so!"

We agree fully with the conclusions of Dr. Allis. Such conclusions are no longer reached in St. Louis because the kind of scholarship which they represent no longer exists there. Only recently (March, 1957, p. 221f) the following defense of the RSV, from the pages of which Modernism peers out everywhere, was published in the *Concordia Theological Monthly*: "The RSV has been attacked on the score that modern liberal theology has been worked into it. We believe, however, that there is no real foundation for this charge."

Such statements, along with a host of others in official and unofficial publications, show which way Missouri is heading today.

P. H. B.

● **A "Fitting and Appropriate"
Name for the ALC**

Commenting on the change of name from the "American Congregation" to "Ascension Lutheran Church" by an ALC-affiliated congregation in Colorado Springs, and on the choice of the name "The American Lutheran Church" by the merger of the ALC and other bodies which is in process of consummation, one Elmer Holzberger of Gordon, Nebraska (evidently a layman and a member of the American Lutheran Church), has said in the *Lutheran Standard* of Dec. 7, 1957: "About a year ago there was considerable controversy about choosing the right name of the new merged Church. Sometimes I wonder — as loose and liberal and unionistic as the American Lutheran Church is becoming — if a name such as The Modernistic Lutheran Church . . . or perhaps The Twenty-First Century Lutheran Church wouldn't have been more fitting and appropriate."

We are simply passing this information along without any further comment of our own other than to recognize in it a bit of lone testimony from within the American Lutheran Church itself as to what one or the other of its members still see going on before their enlightened eyes.

P. H. B.

● The Consistent Christian

A consistent Christian will be a zealous Christian. See, for instance, Titus 2, 14.

● Something That is Necessary Toward Being a True Lutheran

"Only he can become a Lutheran in the true sense of the word who no longer seeks honor among men (John 5, 44); for whom it is enough to have the approbation of God and then to leave it to God whether He wants to make something out of our work for His kingdom; whether He wants to let us be distinguished, or small, unnoticed, nothing."

Walther, *Briefe*, II, p. 129f.

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● Christian Reputation

"The reputation of Christians,' Luther says, 'can and should not consist in such things as the world regards highly and holds in honor; for she can and will neither honor God and His Word. Christians therefore should not be afraid or ashamed of this, but rather rejoice and glory in this and count it an honor, as the Apostles rejoiced that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for Christ's sake, Acts 4, 13 and 5, 41.'

"The Word of God does not lose its power when orthodox congregations and pastors are slandered and despised because of their testimony over against the world and false Christians, yes, when many an earthly disadvantage is associated with faithful adherence to pure doctrine as well as with a decided standing up for conduct that is happy in God. The Word of God is rather glorified and confirmed thereby, wherefore St. Paul says Rom. 5, 3: 'We glory in tribulations.'"

Hom. Mag., 25, 227f.

● What Our Readers Say

"I am a member (a layman) of the Missouri Synod, and a reader of the *Confessional Lutheran*. I think the *Confessional Lutheran* is very much needed in the Missouri Synod. But I also wonder if our protesting against false doctrine and practice and our testifying for the truth should not in time be followed by action, rather than only speaking against error and at the same time continuing to live with it. I sometimes feel the Norwegian Synod, and also the Orthodox Lutheran perhaps did the right thing.

"I see nothing wrong in our local congregation, but with conditions at the seminary as they are, how long or rather how soon can it be before the whole synod will be affected? I fear if conditions will not be corrected while the older generation is still with us, it may never be done. I believe there are still a goodly number of pastors that love the old Missouri. I also notice that many laymen write in. Maybe it would be a fine thing if such could correspond with each other.

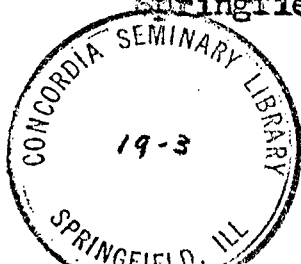
"When I look at the many Missouri Synod churches in which the pure Gospel is preached, and when I look at the far-flung mission fields of Missouri, it fills my heart with joy. But when I look at the errors that are creeping in and tolerated, I begin to fear what the future may hold.

"But the Lord will uphold His Church. He did so when there was no Missouri Synod. God can do it again without the Missouri Synod. But I do hope and pray that the Missouri Synod may remain worthy of helping to build the invisible Church." — Iowa (West).

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MOTTO: *Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you: but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment.* — 1 Cor. 1, 10.

"We have no intention of yielding ought of the eternal, immutable truth of God for the sake of temporal peace, tranquility, and unity (which, moreover, is not in our power to do). Nor would such peace and unity, since it is devised against the truth and for its suppression, have any permanency.. Still less are we inclined to adorn and conceal a corruption of the pure doctrine and manifest, condemned errors. But we entertain heartfelt pleasure and love for, and are on our part sincerely inclined and anxious to advance, that unity according to our utmost power, by which His glory remains to God uninjured, nothing of the divine truth of the Holy Gospel is surrendered, no room is given to the least error, poor sinners are brought to true, genuine repentance, raised up by faith, confirmed in new obedience, and thus justified and eternally saved alone through the sole merit of Christ." — Concluding Statement of the Formula of Concord concerning the Requirements of Confessional Fellowship among Lutherans of the Augsburg Confession. Trigl. Conc., p. 1095.

"It has been our purpose . . . that all unlawful, doubtful, suspicious, and condemned doctrines, wherever and in whatever books they may be found, and whoever may have written them, or even now may be disposed to defend them, might be exposed, distinctly repudiated, so that every one may be faithfully warned against the errors, which are spread here and there in the writings of some theologians, and no one be misled in this matter by the reputation (authority) of any man." — Formula of Concord (Thorough Declaration), Comprehensive Summary; Trigl. Conc., P. 857.

"These highly important matters (the business of religion) concern also the common people and laymen (as they are called), who, inasmuch as they are Christians, must for their salvation distinguish between pure and false doctrine." — Formula of Concord (Thorough Declaration), Comprehensive Summary; Trigl. Conc., P. 853.

VOLUME XIX

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NUMBER 3

IN THIS ISSUE: Churches Once and Now — The "Yoke" of Christ — The Method of Neo-Protestant Theology — The "Hell Dispute" in Norway — Why God Does Not Make Men Infallible — What Lutherans Teach — Inspiration — Modern Liberalism Shows Its Ugly Face — A Dumb Church — The Perils of Ecumenicity — Following the Crowd — The Ecumenical Movement and Communism — Oligarchy at Work — Another Ancient Truth — The Church of the Anti Christ — Correction — What Our Readers Say — Missouri and Masonry — The Zone of Silence — Review of Publications

● Churches Once and Now

"In those early days they had a minimum of church 'machinery' but a maximum of power — resurrection power. The modern church tends to be strong on machinery and weak on power. Organizations, programs, modern techniques are all right so far as they go. But in and of themselves they don't 'go' at all. Only the power of the risen Lord, the power of the Holy Spirit, enables the church and the individual Christian

to be Christ's witnesses — to go and tell."

From an Easter Meditation in the *Lutheran Standard*.

● The "Yoke" of Christ

In Mt. 11, 28-30 Christ says: "Come unto Me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn of Me; for I am meek and lowly of heart; and ye shall find rest

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"As soon as we look more to our synod than to the
invisible kingdom of God, the kingdom of grace and salva-
tion, we begin to be a sect. For this is really the essence
of sectarianism that one has his eye on his little fellowship
above all, even though the kingdom of God may suffer
harm thereby." "That preacher is no true preacher who
merely seeks to fanatize his congregation for the Lutheran
Church, or for the Missouri Synod, or, worse still, only for
the Iowa District. Such men are bad preachers. They must
rather direct people to Christ and say: See, we preach the
pure Word of God, in which the everlasting Gospel of
Christ is continued; that is why you should adhere to us,
and therefore we say, Leave us as soon as we no longer do
this! For salvation by no means depends on us, nor also on
the Missouri Synod. So if it no longer preaches the pure
Word of God, then it is worthy of nothing but that one
forsake it." — Dr. C. F. W. Walther, "Concerning the Chief
Obligations Which a Synod Has if it Rightly Wants to Bear
the Name of an Evangelical Lutheran Synod." Doctrinal Essay
at the First Convention of the Iowa District of the Lutheran
Church—Missouri Synod, 1879; Proceedings, pp. 112-114.

unto your souls. For *My yoke is easy, and
My burden is light.*"

What is the yoke and burden of Christ?

Concerning this matter, Dr. Walther, citing
Luther and adding his own comment, in his
matchless lectures on *The Proper Distinction
between Law and Gospel*, has said (Tr. by
W. H. T. Dau, p. 75f): "Regarding this mat-
ter, Luther writes in his *Glosses on the Gospel
of Matthew* (St. L. Edit., VII, 143): 'Those
are greatly in error who interpret "the yoke
of Christ" in this passage (Mt. 11, 29f) to
mean the so-called Evangelical Law, that is,
commands issued by Christ.' . . . The yoke
and burden of which Christ speaks is nothing
else than the cross which His followers bear
from love of Him. . . . The moment a person
through genuine repentance attains to a
living faith, he has become a blessed man; he
has arrived at the very gate of heaven. When
death comes, the doors are opened, and he
enters. But since it is dangerous for a Chris-
tian to pass his days in ease in this present
life, the Savior has taken the precaution of
putting the cross upon him. Whenever a
Christian professes his faith by word and
deed, people become hostile to him. Even
where this enmity is not manifested publicly,
it is still noticeable and vexes him not a little.
How many have had to lay down their lives
for Christ! But how light is the burden of
Christ compared with that of the Law! . . .
Luther says: 'The power of Christ is marvel-
ous in His saints; for by faith in the hearts
of these men, Christ changes death into
laughter, punishment into joy, and hell into
heaven. For those who believe in Him laugh
to scorn all those ills which worldly and
carnal minds dread and flee and abominate.
That is what Christ calls a pleasant yoke and
a light burden, namely, to bear the cross
joyfully, even as Paul did, who says: "We
glory in tribulation also." Rom. 5, 3.'"

● The Method of Neo-Protestant Theology

"The neo-protestant theology has attained
a considerable skill in interpreting credal
words and formulas in ways completely
foreign to their original meaning. The old
words and formulas are still used, but often
they are made to mean something quite
different from what they originally meant.
In this way it is possible to deny the whole
of Biblical Christianity and still boast of

'faithfulness to the Confession'!" — David Hedegard, *Ecumenism and the Bible*, p. 86.

● The "Hell Dispute" in Norway

The Voluntary Church Convention (Lutheran) in Norway again debated the "Hell Dispute" created by the teaching of Bishop Schelderup of Hamar "that an everlasting punishment in hell is contrary to the spirit of God's revelation in Christ."

The Voluntary Church Convention is an unofficial but old institution of the Lutheran State Church of Norway. It meets every four years. The nine bishops of the State Church are ex officio members of the Convention; in addition, 168 delegates are elected at diocesan meetings.

In his opening address, Bishop Johannes Smemo, head of the Church of Norway, dealt extensively with the so-called "Schelderup case," which is now four years old. He pointed out that the dispute has never died down and has caused many difficulties to practical cooperation and to the whole work of the Church. He therefore felt that a final word should be said. But Bishop Smemo also stressed that "the deviations of Bishop Schelderup do not concern the most vital points in our faith" and that other well known theologians hold the same views as Schelderup. The State Church, he said further, "must also be wide enough to include such views, even if the Church cannot recognize them as its teaching." On the other hand, Bishop Schelderup told dramatically about his difficulties in his own diocese, where a boycott has been organized by leading circles in Oslo, and he asked the Convention, if it really wanted him to resign, to say so clearly. In reply, Bishop Arne Fjellbu said that it would be "catastrophe" if Bishop Schelderup resigned.

A four-point resolution, which did not mention Bishop Schelderup by name was introduced by Bishop Johannes Smidt, who pointed out that it was an attempt to put an end to the tragic affair in order that the Church could concentrate in more constructive matters. This resolution, which was adopted by a vote of 108-18 by the Convention, closely follows the line suggested by Bishop Smemo in his opening address. It declares that denial of eternal torment in hell "has never been the teaching of the Christian Church, and that the Church of

Norway must abide with its confessional books in loyalty to the Word of our Lord." Dealing with relationships to the State, it said that the Government's decision four years ago that Bishop Schelderup was not "outside the confession" does not mean that the Government can tell the Church what to teach; the Church of Norway is still "a confessional Church," it added. It stated that the fact that Bishop Schelderup was not asked to resign "did not mean that his teaching was recognized as the teaching of the Church." On the other hand, it declared as to practical cooperation with Bishop Schelderup that "each one must make his own decision in loyalty to his conscience before God."

In a later statement Bishop Schelderup said that in view of many expressions of sympathy he has decided to continue as bishop. He feels that the reaction after the convention has shown that there is "a strong desire for a more broadminded attitude within our old folk's Church." The bishops, since the meeting, have both jointly and individually published statements in which they have reconfirmed that no one has voiced the view that Bishop Schelderup should resign. In a broadcast in which he indicated that other bishops were of the same opinion, Bishop Fjellbu stated that he wished Bishop Schelderup to continue as bishop in his present diocese and expressed the hope that pastors and congregations would cooperate loyally. The secular press of Norway, as might be expected, has reacted strongly in defense of Bishop Schelderup.

Such are the facts up to date in the "Hell-Dispute" within the Lutheran Church in Norway. The Church may have a position on paper; but in actual practice each one "must make his own decision" even though this be diametrically contrary to the "confession" of the Church. Such is the law of the Church of Norway. Far from its being anything to be alarmed about, it would be a catastrophe if men in leading positions who are denying one or the other fundamental of our faith were to resign their position. The Church "must also be wide enough to include such views, even if the Church cannot recognize them as its teaching."

Lord have mercy!

P. H. B.

Slanted Reporting in the LUTHERAN WITNESS

The facts which we have given in our article on the "Hell Dispute" in Norway,

above, have been taken from a release of the *News Bureau* of the National Lutheran Council, dated Nov. 21, 1957.

In what a different light this whole matter is presented in the *Lutheran Witness* (Dec. 3, 1957)! Under the heading "Convention Rejects Norwegian Bishop's Views on Hell," the *Lutheran Witness*, which, we are sure, had access to the news release from which we have taken the facts in our own report, in its News of the Church in the World department states the following:

"The Voluntary Church Convention reported an unofficial but representative body in the state Lutheran Church of Norway, adopted a resolution rejecting the views of a bishop who denied the doctrine of everlasting punishment in hell.

"By a 108-18 vote the delegates declared the teaching of Bishop Kristian Schjelderup of Hamar 'has never been the teaching of the Christian Church, and the Church of Norway must abide by its confessional books, in loyalty to the words of our Lord.'

"The action in November climaxed a dispute arising in 1953 when Bishop Schjelderup protested a radio address in which Prof. Ole Christian Hallesby, Norwegian lay leader and pietistic theologian, stressed the condemnation to hell of all unbelievers. The convention meets every four years.

"The bishop maintained that the professor's teachings were incompatible with the position that Christianity was a religion of love."

What a different picture readers of the *Lutheran Witness* are thus given from what is actually going on in the Church of Norway! Is this the proper way to report events in the Church? Or is it part of the "new look" which the *Lutheran Witness* began to take on a few years ago?

It is perhaps unnecessary for most of our readers to add that the Church of Norway is of course part of the Lutheran World Federation, which some liberal spirits within the Missouri Synod insist we should join.

Stating something that is indeed true, but less than the full truth, is often equivalent to stating the greatest and most practical falsehood.

P. H. B.

**PASS YOUR COPY OF THE
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☉ Why God Does Not Make Men Infallible

The Lord God knew very well why he made no one else as infallible, as unerring as the Prophets and Apostles. Because we would then no longer care about the written Word, but would say: There is the man. He is infallible. I'll take him.

Dr. F. C. W. Walther. (*Proceedings*, Syn. Conf., 1884, p. 17.)

☉ What Lutherans Teach

Lutherans teach that there is an INVISIBLE Church, which consists of all such as in their hearts truly and sincerely accept Jesus Christ as their Savior; that this Church is one; that Jesus Christ is its only Head and Lord; that all members thereof enjoy equal rights; that it may be found wherever the Gospel of Christ is known; and that it will endure forever.

Lutherans also teach that there is a VISIBLE Christian Church, consisting of all such as profess the Christian faith and gather about God's Word; that among these there are hypocrites, defenders of false teachings, and supporters of un-Christian practices; and that it is the duty of every sincere Christian to unite with that section of the visible Church which stands for pure preaching and right practices and to avoid religious fellowship with all such as depart from the divine Word.

References: John 18, 35; Lk. 17, 20-21; John 8, 31, 42; I Cor. 12, 13; Eph. 1, 22-23; 2, 19-22; Is. 55, 10-11; Mt. 16, 18; 13, 47-48; 22, 2-14; 15, 9; I Cor. 11, 18; Rom. 17, 17; II Thess. 3, 6, 14; II Cor. 6, 14-18.

* * * *

Lutherans teach that the divided state of the visible Christian Church is a deplorable condition, for which, however, not the supporters of divine truth, but the teachers and upholders of false doctrines are responsible; that there can be no true outward union without inward unity of faith; and that the hope for a united Christianity will become a reality just as soon as all professing Christians have become one in rejecting all error and accepting every doctrine set forth in the Word of God.

References: Rom. 16, 17; Eph. 4, 3-6.

Tract (Karl Kretzschmar), published by Concordia Publishing House.

● Inspiration

Dean Burgon, a man of vast learning, says: "You cannot dissect inspiration into substance and form. As for thoughts being inspired apart from the words which gave them expression, you might as well talk of a tune without notes, or a sum without figures. No such theory of inspiration is even intelligible. It is as illogical as it is worthless and cannot be too sternly put down."

The Fundamentals: A Testimony to the Truth, Vol. VII, p. 23.

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● Modern Liberalism Shows Its Ugly Face

The *Northwestern Lutheran* (Wisconsin Synod) published the following fine article in its issue of July 7:

"Of late the *Christian Century*, leading periodical and spokesman for what we among us are wont to refer to as 'liberal Christianity,' has been showing signs of inner disturbance. Waspish editorials have been appearing which launched thinly veiled attacks upon the Billy Graham crusade currently going on in New York City. The rumbling and buzzing exploded into a roar in the issue of June 19; and now that the lid is off, the true heart of liberalism lies exposed, beating angrily. It is an instructive and fascinating spectacle. Let me describe it for you.

"What troubles the *Christian Century*? The method and the message of Billy Graham, and the support both are finding. In earlier editorials his methods were severely criticized. A smoothly operating, carefully rigged system, it was said, makes Graham's mass revival meetings an apparent success. But now it becomes clear that the real issue, the thing that haunts and horrifies the Liberals, is Graham's message. I shall quote the *Century*.

"It sees an 'attempted revival of fundamentalism as a major factor in Protestant life. The narrow and divisive creed which

the churches rejected a generation ago is staging a comeback.' And worst of all, this is happening in New York. If the effort succeeds it will make mincemeat of the ecumenical movement, will divide congregations and denominations, will set back Protestant Christianity a half-century.' New York is the center of power in American life. . . . New York is the center of financial power, and the prominence of insurance and other kinds of financiers on the sponsoring committee points to future access to almost unlimited funds. New York controls the web of communications in the United States, and the Graham advent on television points to future access to almost unlimited audiences. In these and other ways the New York campaign represents a major breakthrough.'

"A breakthrough of exactly what? you ask. Of fundamentalism, of course. 'This eccentric and comparatively modern creed uses five articles as hooks with which to fasten itself to the churches. It presents them as a whole. To call any one of them in question, or even to interpret them in other than the language of Scripture, was to shatter the entire structure of the Christian faith as fundamentalism saw it. By its emphasis on these points and only on these points, fundamentalism twisted the whole gospel out of its historic proportions and context. . . .'

"The whole Gospel has been twisted . . . by emphasis on which articles, points or doctrines? The *Century* lists them. '(1) The virgin birth of Jesus; (2) the infallible inerrancy of the Bible in every detail; (3) the resurrection of the physical body of Jesus and of the saints at the end of history; (4) the substitutionary blood atonement; (5) the imminent return of Christ in person to establish his kingdom.' 'Fundamentalism makes these points the test of orthodoxy, the essence of the Christian faith.'

"The thinking that goes on in the large circle represented by the *Century* must amaze many serious people who will suffer from the delusion that Holy Scripture and the historic ecumenical Confessions of the Church are the generally accepted standards of faith in most churches professing the name of Christ. The editorial in the *Century* ought to clear up that misapprehension once and for all and demonstrate that the only point at which the message of liberal 'Christianity' touches the Christian faith is the point of the tongue. It is essentially a

heathen, pagan religion that dominates the World Council of Churches.

"No doubt it will be real news to many of us that, as the *Century* affirms, fundamentalism 'was able to force the resignation of Harry Emerson Fosdick from the pulpit of a New York Presbyterian Church' (in the 1920's); or that, in that era, 'local churches were divided, the denominations were kept in a turmoil, new denominations were formed, the churches unable with full vigor to grapple with the commanding tasks of service and evangelism — all because of the insistence by a fundamentalist minority upon the inclusion of the fundamentalist creed in the terms of church membership, or as a qualification for the minister, or as a *sine qua non* [an indispensable thing or condition — Ed.] for cooperation with other churches or denominations.' Even more astonishing is the revelation — certainly somewhat contradictory to the above — that 'fundamentalism suffered an ignominious defeat a generation ago, when it failed to capture a single major denomination.'

"It cannot be our purpose to defend Billy Graham. His fundamentalism is not Lutheranism. It does not understand the truth about Conversion, nor of half a dozen vital doctrines of the Christian faith. It is not the evangelism of the Apostles who obeyed Christ in 'teaching them all things, whatsoever I have commanded you.' In its way Grahamism is just as unionistic as Liberalism.

But the liberalism attacks on Graham represents a degree of subversion of historical, not to speak of Scriptural, truth that would have been indefensible even in the Middle Ages. When men fulminate against the Virgin Birth, the inerrancy of the Bible, the physical resurrection, the vicarious atonement and the return of Christ when these are held to constitute the essence of the Christian faith, and claim that this 'twists the whole gospel out of its historic proportions and context,' they are pulling up by its very roots the Reformation from which they claim to have sprung. They saw off the limb on which they sit. Any pretensions to Christianity where those doctrines have been dogmatized out of existence are ludicrous. They have only themselves to thank if a resurgence of 'fundamentalism' brings their ecclesiastical house of cards down upon their heads."

And we are told over and over again, also in Missouri Synod publications, that the

old Liberalism is dead. We have said repeatedly, and we say again, that what is really dead, is the capacity of certain people properly to discern spirits.

We thank the Wisconsin Synod for giving this fine testimony to its people, and to us.
P. H. B.

● A Dumb Church

A dumb Church is a dying Church, and it ought to be; for Christ has sent us here in order, amongst other things, that we may bring Christian principles to bear . . . ; and not be afraid to speak when we are called upon by conscience to do so. — Maclaren's *Expositions of Holy Scripture*, Eph. 5, 11.

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● The Perils of Ecumenicity

The discussion of "The Perils of Independency" in the last issue of CHRISTIANITY TODAY was not based upon a predisposition to condemn Independency, but rather to examine its foundations and to assess its weaknesses. It is time now to reflect on its antithesis, ecumenicity. In this issue we propose to speak of its perils.

Independency is often motivated, we conceded, by a commendable desire to glorify Christ and to exalt the Word of God. The ecumenical movement likewise, gains its appeal from a worthy biblical concept. That concept is the unity of the body of Christ. While it has been elaborated from time to time since the Reformation, not until lately have multitudes in the churches regarded it with great seriousness.

The Christian leader can point to much in the Bible which speaks of Christian unity. We do not say there is never a biblical basis for division. Apart from the issue of apostasy, so much invoked by the separatists, there exists another biblical basis for separation about which little is said today in any Christian circle. There is clear biblical precedent for the discipline of true believers who, falling into gross sin, thereby invite

excommunication. Such an act of discipline, which purposes the exclusion of the impenitent lest he contaminate other believers, is exercised not with a penal objective in view but aims to reclaim the offending person through refusing him fellowship in the ordinances or sacraments. But except for these reasons, divisions in the body of Christians originating in the pride of men are sinful.

The unity of the body, virtually all would stress, is a clear teaching and requirement of the Word of God. Nor should we minimize the fact that much of the current literature devoted to the study of church unity is biblically oriented. Thus John Bennett could assert (as one example): "The new emphasis upon the Church has been accompanied by a return to the Bible as the medium of revelation" (*Toward World-Wide Christianity* [edited by O. Frederick Nolde] [italics supplied] Harper, 1946.) Men look to the Scriptures as to a polished mirror which reflects the true unity of the body. This biblical appeal is significant. It acknowledges, consciously or unconsciously, a formal principle which Independency has always stressed, and represents in reality a dynamic change from that attitude and spirit of Liberalism long rampant in America.

Unfortunately, for the ecumenist, two main problems follow when he resorts to the Bible either as a temporary authority or witness. These problems jeopardize the major logic of the ecumenical movement because of the impasse to which they lead.

In the first place, proponents of organic church union who appeal to the Scriptures as a basis for the movement seldom choose to go much beyond this preliminary dependency on the Bible. But the Bible witnesses, in fact, to far more than the unity of believers. The question may rightly be asked: "Since the ecumenist lays stress on the biblically-taught unity of the body, why stop there? Why not accept the other teachings of the Scriptures, truths on which the Bible lays emphasis no less vigorously than on the truth of the unity of the body? Many proponents of the ecumenical movement clearly resist such a step. They proclaim unity from the housetops, but they shy away from the virgin birth, the bodily resurrection of the dead, the substitutionary atonement of Jesus Christ, as well as from the historical trinitarianism of the church and other clear implications of Scripture.

By what logic and authority, then, is there any justification for the isolation of one strand of the biblical teaching from all else, elevating it to a position of supreme importance and degrading the other teachings to positions of relative inconsequence? For such doctrines are as much a part of biblical theology as the unity of the body.

The ecumenical movement in general elevates the doctrine of the unity of the body above every other doctrine. There is a driving emphasis on this unity accompanied by a rather pale and anemic concern for basic Christian doctrine. This trend is regarded by those who cannot support ecumenicity as a key reason for their fears. Doctrinal laxity to many is vitally related to participation in a movement, and unless the great fundamentals of the faith have been spelled out intelligibly they cannot warm up to the concept of unity without dogma.

This theological vagueness which has been characteristic of ecumenicity makes it vulnerable to the charge of doctrinal inclusivism. Whereas Independency errs on the side of exclusivism, tending to spell out its position so minutely that it separates itself readily from true believers as well as from unbelievers, the ecumenical adherents tend to be so inclusive that they regard outsiders as members of the body. One group excludes some persons who really ought to be included; the other includes some whose lack of adequate credentials ought to exclude them from an apostolic fellowship.

A second problem which faces the ecumenical movement, if it professes to find its rationale in the Word of God, has to do with the nature of unity. No one can disagree with the emphasis that the Bible has a specific view of the nature of Christian unity. And, if there is to be unity, there must first be some agreement upon the nature of that unity. Precisely what is it? Here again the vessel of ecumenicity floats in waters filled with perilous shoals.

It would be unfair to ascribe to the ecumenical movement one definitive and authoritative voice touching the nature of the unity it seeks. There are divergent opinions on this subject. The question is being debated vigorously. These considerations suggest an adventurous search for a goal which is itself uncertain. Ecumenicity is "going somewhere," but it has not officially defined just where it is going. Passionately it believes in unity, but *which* unity it cannot, or does

not, tell. Therefore those alert to the perils of ecumenicity must forge their criticism with a view to what the advocates of union say.

Sincere, devoted men in the ecumenical grouping assert that the ultimate goal of the movement is organic union of the churches. This is not to say that all of them believe in it but a substantial number do and they are vocal and active in their desires to make this union a reality. Bishop G. Bromley Oxnam in a 1948 episcopal address in Boston before the Bishops of his church discloses the concept of unity cherished by him. He plainly advocated the ultimate union of all Protestant churches, looking forward to a future merger of the two remaining churches — Protestant and Roman Catholic — into one holy catholic church. Prior to the remarks of Bishop Oxnam, Harper and Brothers published the Interseminary Series. This series contained material written by leading ecumenists, and at least one volume of that series bulwarks Bishop Oxnam's expressions.

John C. Bennett quotes Henry Pitt Van Dusen as saying (and he agrees with Mr. Van Dusen): "Henry Pitt Van Dusen rightly says that 'Christian Unity which does not imply and make possible whatever degree of Church Union may be held to be the ultimate desideration is something less than genuine and true Christian Unity.'" John A. Mackay of Princeton Theological Seminary is a fervent believer in union. He has declared that a world church will make the greatest contribution to world community. Thus, in 1946, he said: "While it is true that nothing will make a greater contribution to world community than a world Church, the possibility must also be contemplated that a world Church, a Church united in Jesus Christ with a membership in every part of the inhabited globe, might find itself in a very hostile world." In a further word he says: "It would be much better that *union be postponed until* their differences have been frankly faced." Henry Smith Leiper and Abdel R. Wentz have stated: "... a basic, if not the most important aspect of the ecumenical movement is its vision of a universal Church."

H. Paul Douglas reflected the feeling of the Madras Conference of 1938 which foretold the same story. "It was especially emphasized by the Madras Conference of 1938 that there 'has come in many fields a deep and growing conviction that the Spirit of

God is guiding the various branches of His church to seek for a realization of a visible and organic union.'"

Such statements of sentiment can be expanded by quotations from men in the "Who's Who of Ecumenicity," O. Frederick Nolde, ed., Interseminary Series, Harper and Brothers, 1946, pps. 42, 44, 61, 66, 80, 197.

Still other perils, however, lurk in the background of the movement. Ecclesiasticism bedevils all movements which seek union. One need not go beyond the Roman Church to discover how true this is. Therein the right of private opinion and of private interpretation of the Scripture is denied. The concentration of power in the hands of the few is a corrupting device. The experiences of secular and religious history demonstrates that power corrupts and that complete power corrupts completely. When men are dependent upon their superiors for position and preference, they easily lose their freedom to speak the truth in charity without suffering ecclesiastical censure and loss of preferment. The seeds of this evil already exist in some of the denominations. More men would testify to these evils if they did not fear official reprisal.

Another certainty is that ecumenicity can never achieve the absolute visible organic union of Christ's body in history. Assuming for the moment that the ultimate goal is the reunion of Christendom, then the ecumenical movement itself contains seeds of divisiveness as does Independency. There will always be those who will insist that unity is spiritual, and not visible nor organizational, and that true unity has in it a transcendental element in view of the communion of saints. Never will it be possible to bring together all these diverse elements which make up the true body of Christ. As long as so much as one segment of the body is excluded in history, absolute unity does not exist. It has never fully existed in history, although the Roman and Greek Churches before the Great Schism provide the fullest approximation in history. And goal of absolute unity is ephemeral and chimerical; at best, visible unity can never be more than partial.

Ecumenicity tends to be just as intolerant as Independency, although this intolerance is expressed in a somewhat different fashion. Whereas Independency draws narrow lines, defining beliefs in such a detailed and technical fashion that it rules out many, ecumen-

icity also draws lines which are narrow and intolerant. It has little use or respect for those with whom it differs, easily regarding as fanatical and divisive those who refuse to cooperate within its orbit of inclusivism. It will tolerate and welcome those who will submit to its inclusivistic theology, but will try ruthlessly to crush and eliminate the opposition by ecclesiastical devices.

One of the tragic weakness of Independency is that it majors on minors. And ecumenicity does not entirely escape this same peril. It reverses the process, however. It minors on majors, exalting to a place of primacy what is not important, relegating to a secondary position that which is basic and necessary to a full-orbed Gospel. Both attitudes are essentially heretical. While they are opposite in polarity, they both rise from a departure from the apostolic base. One narrowly excludes divergence of opinion, so that it becomes difficult for some undoubted Christians to find standing room. The other is so broad and so indefinite that one cannot be sure on what ground he stands. Neither one is truly biblical nor finally acceptable. The narrow obscurantism of Independency is more widely known and challenged. The broad vistas of ecumenicity, indefinite and elusive, are less generally recognized as participating in the same spirit which characterizes those who major on minors. But the one is no less a peril than the other.

The discussion here does not concern the question of "elements of good" in ecumenicity or in independency. Rather, the purpose is to speak about the perils which beset both. This much is clear: neither movement is entirely in error. But neither possesses the sum total of truth. Neither movement possesses the ingredients of a permanent and suitable solution to the problems which vex the Church of Christ in history. The end of one is an unrestrained individualism: every man his own master, priest and congregation. The end of the other makes one man the master of all; its ultimate form is the pope of Rome, or another pope like him. The fact that both movements head in these directions does not mean that the end is inevitable. But it does suggest that, unless substantial changes are made to redirect the movements, this sad outcome remains a live possibility.

These observations are made neither in a spirit of criticism nor of condemnation. They follow rather from an earnest attempt

to see the patterns in history, and from them to anticipate, however dimly, the shape of things to come. Silence has little influence; a word in season, spoken in an irenic spirit, may give pause for reflection and revision.

(Reprinted, with the permission of its publishers from *Christianity Today*, published fortnightly by Today's Publications, Inc., 1014 Washington Building, Washington 5, D. C. — Foregoing other comment, we want to say that while we insist on the basic principle of *private judgment* — the principle that the individual base his judgment in matters of Christian faith and life on Scripture itself and not on any other source or supposed "authority" — we with Holy Scripture itself [II Pet. 1, 20f] reject any and every supposed "right" of private interpretation [such as that e.g. of the pope] or private opinion contrary to Scripture doctrine. — P. H. B.)

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● Following the Crowd

Those who follow the crowd are quickly lost in it. — Anon.

● The Ecumenical Movement and Communism

In an article ("Oligarchy at Work") immediately following the one in hand, we are bringing to the attention of our readers a timely testimony from *United Evangelical Action* (Sept. 15, 1957), a middle-of-the-road publication. The article referred to shows not only how agents of Communism sit high in the councils of the Ecumenical Movement, but also what high-handed methods are used to keep them there by liberal churchmen such as, for instance, Dr. Franklin Clark Fry, president of the United Lutheran Church, who is now also President of the Lutheran World Federation and of the World Council of Churches.

There is little if any practical difference between the World Council of Churches and the Lutheran World Federation, both of which are in the middle of the "ecumenical" (i.e., super-duper unionistic) stream. Indeed, all but one or two of the churches which belong to the Lutheran World Federation also belong to the World Council of Churches. And the two organizations (the WCC and the LWF) are so intertwined that it is often impossible to tell whether their spokesmen, e.g. Nolde, are speaking for the one or for the other or for both of them at one and the same time. Headquarters of both are on one and the same local premises in Geneva.

The Minnesota District of the Missouri Synod gave mighty poor account of itself, to say the least, when at its latest convention, the time of which coincided with that of the LWF, it adopted a resolution of fraternal sympathy with delegates from Communist-controlled countries. And what should one say of men like Mr. Gallmeyer, member of the board of directors of the Missouri Synod, who was sent to the convention as an observer, but who took it upon himself, according to public reports, openly to carry the banner of the Missouri Synod as part of the official parade of the LWF Assembly which led to its opening service, as though it were indeed his business, and his alone, to decide where Missouri should stand with respect to the Lutheran World Federation, and that despite official resolutions to the contrary by Missouri on doctrinal grounds.

All of this raises a question of deepest import. Have we a confessional position on paper only? Has the doctrine of confessional fellowship been permitted to become a mere practical Open Question within Missouri under its present leadership?

This is a day when the Missouri Synod and the Synodical Conference could and should more than ever exert leadership in the direction of historic Lutheranism! What a sad chapter is being written in the history of our Church by its following others around instead of asserting such leadership according to its God-given opportunities and responsibilities!

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● Oligarchy at Work

When the World Council of Churches was set up at Amsterdam in 1948, Dr. Petrus Olaf Bersell, then president of the Augustana Lutheran Church, warned that the Executive Committee could well become an oligarchy. Last month in New Haven, Connecticut, he saw his fears realized.

A fellow Lutheran, Dr. Franklin Clark Fry, was chairman. The time had come for the election of the Executive Committee. Dr. Bersell arose and announced that he would be unable to vote for the reelection of Dr. Josef L. Hromadka, dean of Comenius Protestant Theological Faculty in Prague, Czechoslovakia. Many others agreed.

Dr. Hromadka is an outspoken apologist for Red Communism. He has been exposed time and time again as a menace to all the principles our free world holds dear. Dr. Bersell said that in view of Dr. Hromadka's record and statements made by him following the Hungarian revolution he could not in good conscience vote for him to be a member of "the very Sanhedrin of the World Council."

With typical parliamentary ruthlessness the chairman of the meeting ruled that the vote must be for or against the entire slate which had been proposed. Members were aghast at this high-handed procedure but were helpless to change it. The vote was ordered amidst great confusion.

Out of the seventy members of the Central Committee only 28 voted for the slate and for Dr. Hromadka. Eight had the courage to vote down the slate as a protest against Red infiltration of the WCC and the ruthless tactics of the oligarchy. The remainder of the ecclesiastical body refused to vote, a course which in effect also constituted a sharp rebuff. In spite of this, the chairman declared the slate elected, including Dr. Hromadka.

Seldom in Protestant inter-church affairs has there been such an example of totalitarian procedure. The oligarchy is already at work in the "coming great Church."

As a footnote, it is interesting to observe that Dr. Franklin Clark Fry has just been elected titular head of World Lutheranism (LWF) and that he is president of the United Lutheran Church, largest American Lutheran body, in addition to being president of the World Council of Churches, thus

making him the most powerful non-Romanist ecclesiastical figure in Christendom today.

United Evangelical Action.

● Another Ancient Truth

All that is needed for evil to prevail is for good men to do nothing.

● The Church of the Antichrist

In its sixth session the Council of Trent passed this decree: "If anyone says that men are made righteous solely through the imputation of the righteousness of Christ or solely through the forgiveness of sin, to the exclusion of the grace and love which by the Holy Spirit is poured out in their hearts and is inherent in them; or that the grace by which we are made righteous is nothing else than the favor of God, — let him be accursed. If anyone says that the faith which makes men righteous is nothing else than trust in the divine mercy, which remits sins for Christ's sake, or that it is only this trust that makes us righteous, let him be accursed. . . . If anyone says that a justified person does not, by reason of the good works which are done by him through the grace of God and the merit of Jesus Christ, whose living member he is, truly merit an increase of grace, eternal life, and the actual obtainment of eternal life, provided he dies in grace, — let him be accursed." Unless you are utterly blind and know nothing of the Christian religion, I believe that a plainer proof that the pope is the Antichrist cannot be offered you.

Everywhere the papists set up the cross and make the sign of the cross; but that is sheer hypocrisy. They have the cross, but without its meaning in connection with Christ. Again and again we read that they call upon Mary to keep the ship of Peter from perishing. They do not readily say: "Jesus is our Fortress, our Rock," etc. Verily, the worst sects in the Christian Church are less harmful than the pope. For all sects without exception admit that the only way in which a person may be saved is by faith in the grace of God in Christ Jesus. All sects, by their teaching, obscure the Gospel, but they do not, as the pope does, anathematize and curse it. Inasmuch as all sects allow this thesis, that salvation is by the grace of God, through faith in

Christ Jesus, to stand, they are incomparably superior to the papacy. They are corrupted churches, but the papacy is a false church. Just as counterfeit money is no money, so the papal church, being a false church, is no church. Compared with the corrupted sectarian churches, the papacy is a non-church, a denial of the Church of Christ. I am not speaking of the Roman Catholic, but of the papistic church, the church which submits to the pope, accepts his decrees, and repeats his anathemas. This church is the one which history knows as the *ecclesia maligna*, the malign, pernicious Church, and the synagog of Satan.

Walther, *The Proper Distinction between Law and Gospel*, tr. by W. H. T. Dau, p. 74f.

● Correction

In the article headed "Two Fine Testimonies" etc. in our January issue (p. 3), it should have been stated that the Rev. F. W. Noack is President of the Queensland District of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Australia, not of the United Evangelical Lutheran Church of Australia, which is affiliated with the American Lutheran Church.

● What Our Readers Say

"Enclosed you will find my check for a subscription to the *Confessional Lutheran*. May God continue to bless your bold testimony in behalf of the truth." — Pastor, California.

"I should like to renew my subscription to your fine paper. May the Lord grant you continued power and strength to publish the truth and to oppose error." — Layman, Minnesota.

"Since moving to Nebraska I miss my brother's copy of your magazine. Please send me a subscription. Keep the balance and use it to keep up the good work. May the Lord bless your efforts." — Layman, Nebraska.

"I happily send my contribution to a cause with which I am in sympathy and to which I am deeply committed for the Truth's sake." — Pastor, Illinois.

"Enclosed you will find my check to help the work of the *Confessional Lutheran* so that we as Lutherans may keep the Word of God in its truth and purity and that it may be preserved unto our children." — Layman, Minnesota.

"I enjoy reading the *Confessional Lutheran* very much — I read every word.

Although I may not agree with every last thing you print, I appreciate very much what you people are doing. I am of the A.L.C., but I admire your stand very much. I hope and pray for true unity with the Mo. Synod — a thing that I feel would help both of us. But, as you stress, it must be a complete unity, down to every last detail, if it is to be any good.

"I think you of the *Confessional Lutheran* have a big job cut out for you, for you are serving as the conscience of Lutheranism (such as it is) in the world. We need you, so do not tire in your labors.

"I pray that God will continue to bless your work, and to guide and direct you. Thank you very much for a periodical in which I can put my confidence. I wish the *Confessional Lutheran* were twice as long."
— A.L.C. Pastor.

"I greatly appreciate the information I get from the *Confessional Lutheran*, information which cannot be gotten anywhere else, and which is so essential to staying abreast of what is going on in our beloved church. One is alarmed to find that we are gradually slipping away from pure doctrine and from good old Lutheran, Missourian practice. Have those who particularly are placed by Synod on the towers of our Zion as watchmen grown weary and careless like old dogs that cannot bark when there is trouble brewing? What old Dr. Zorn wrote many years ago, shortly before going to His reward, is regrettably coming true." — Pastor in Wisconsin.

"I enjoyed the instalment of Fr. Brunn's "Ist der Papst der Antichrist?" in the October *Confessional Lutheran*. It is about as direct and clear a statement on the subject as I've read in some time." — Pastor, Minneapolis, Minn.

"Enclosed you will find a check in the amount of ten dollars. Will you please send a subscription to N., and one to our pastor, N. The balance is to be used as you see fit." — Layman, Nebr.

"I always read the *Confessional Lutheran* from cover to cover and am very much interested in preserving pure doctrine. I like your stand against the RSV. I wrote to Pres. B. three years ago and again a while back that it seems to me it would be his place to warn against the public use of the RSV in our churches. The Common Confession is compromising and should be scrapped. It seems to me our Missouri Synod wants to do *what is popular*. Keep up the good work. The Lord bless it!" — Pastor, Ill.

● Missouri and Masonry

Under Funeral Notices, the *Tampa (Florida) Morning Tribune*, Feb. 12, brought the following:

"Carter, Harry R. — Mr. Harry R. Carter, age 61, of 8015 12th Street, passed away Tuesday morning in a local hospital. Funeral services will be held Wednesday afternoon at 4 o'clock at the chapel of the F. T. Blount Co. Funeral Home, with the Rev. Herman W. Petersen of St. John's Lutheran Church officiating. Interment will be in Myrtle Hill Cemetery with Memorial Lodge No. 20, F & A M, in charge of the services at the graveside. Members of the Masonic Lodge will serve as pallbearers."

The Rev. Herm. W. Petersen is listed as a pastor of the Missouri Synod in its *Lutheran Annual*.

● The Zone of Silence

Members of our church, lay people especially, are often dumbfounded when through publications like the *Confessional Lutheran* they first learn what is really going on in our church, — matters which are corrupting and destroying our church as a Scriptural confessional fellowship, but regarding which official voices and official publications remain strangely silent.

In the Pacific Ocean, off Vancouver Island, there is a stretch of water known as "The Zone of Silence." This particular area is acoustically dead; no sound penetrates it. And because no buoy, bell, or siren can warn ships of dangerous reefs, there are many wrecks on the ocean floor at that spot.

Members of our church will have to take the trouble to inform themselves of the dangers that surround us, and this all the more in view of the deadly silence that prevails in certain quarters, if the good old ship Missouri is not to founder like so many a church before it.

P. H. B.

● Review of Publications

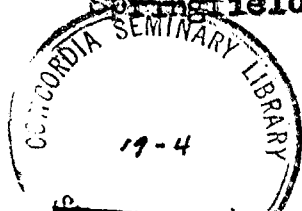
The Door That Walked Away, and other Stories. By G. J. Neumann. 96 pages. 5x8 inches. Cloth. C. 1957, The Wartburg Press, Columbus, Ohio. \$1.00.

Delightfully interesting stories for the small-fry; but definitely a book to be read to the children. More pictures, especially colored ones, would have improved this book. The author shows an understanding of the children's make-believe. Sturdy binding.

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MOTTO: Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you: but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment." — 1 Cor. 1, 10.

"We have no intention of yielding sight of the eternal, immutable truth of God for the sake of temporal peace, tranquillity, and unity (which, moreover, is not in our power to do). Nor would such peace and unity, since it is devised against the truth and for its suppression, have any permanency. Still less are we inclined to adorn and conceal a corruption of the pure doctrine and manifest, condemned errors. But we entertain heartfelt pleasure and love for, and are on our part sincerely inclined and anxious to advance, that unity according to our utmost power, by which His glory remains to God uninjured, nothing of the divine truth of the Holy Gospel is surrendered, no room is given to the least error, poor sinners are brought to true, genuine repentance, raised up by faith, confirmed in new obedience, and thus justified and eternally saved alone through the sole merit of Christ." — Concluding Statement of the Formula of Concord concerning the Requirements of Confessional Fellowship among Lutherans of the Augsburg Confession. Trigl. Conc., p. 1095.

"It has been our purpose . . . that all unlawful, doubtful, suspicious, and condemned doctrines, wherever and in whatever books they may be found, and whoever may have written them, or even now may be disposed to defend them, might be exposed, distinctly repudiated, so that every one may be faithfully warned against the errors, which are spread here and there in the writings of some theologians, and no one be misled in this matter by the reputation (authority) of any man." — Formula of Concord (Thorough Declaration), Comprehensive Summary; Trigl. Conc., P. 857.

"These highly important matters (the business of religion) concern also the common people and laymen (as they are called), who, inasmuch as they are Christians, must for their salvation distinguish between pure and false doctrine." — Formula of Concord (Thorough Declaration), Comprehensive Summary; Trigl. Conc., P. 853.

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IN THIS ISSUE: "Ye Are the Salt of the Earth"—A Layman Instructs His Pastor Concerning a Romanizing Affliction — Altar Boys — Concerning the Use of Incense in the Church — "Keep Me From the Snares Which They Have Laid for Me!" — St. Louis Continues to Advocate Celibacy — What Our Readers Say

● "Ye Are the Salt of the Earth"

The world could tolerate it if we proclaimed Christ and all the articles of faith correctly. But if we want to seize it and salt it by showing that its wisdom and sanctity are worthless, indeed, blind and damned, this it cannot and will not tolerate. It accuses the preachers of doing nothing but criticizing and biting, or causing revolutions and discord, and of maligning the clergy and good works. But what can we do? Salting has to bite. Although they criticize us as biters, we know that this is how it has

to be and that Christ has commanded the salt to be sharp and continually caustic, as we shall hear. St. Paul is always rebuking the whole world and criticizing everything it praises and does without faith in Christ. And Christ says (John 16:8): "When the Holy Spirit comes, He will convince the world." That is to say: "He will attack everything He finds in the world, without exception or discrimination. He will not rebuke some and praise others, or punish only the thieves and criminals. He will throw everything on one pile, one with another — great, small, pious, wise, holy, or whatever — in

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"As soon as we look more to our synod than to the
invisible kingdom of God, the kingdom of grace and salva-
tion, we begin to be a sect. For this is really the essence
of sectarianism that one has his eye on his little fellowship
above all, even though the kingdom of God may suffer
harm thereby." "That preacher is no true preacher who
merely seeks to fanaticize his congregation for the Lutheran
Church, or for the Missouri Synod, or, worse still, only for
the Iowa District. Such men are bad preachers. They must
rather direct people to Christ and say: See, we preach the
pure Word of God, in which the everlasting Gospel of
Christ is continued; that is why you should adhere to us,
and therefore we say, Leave us as soon as we no longer do
this! For salvation by no means depends on us, nor also on
the Missouri Synod. So if it no longer preaches the pure
Word of God, then it is worthy of nothing but that one
forsake it." — Dr. C. F. W. Walther, "Concerning the Chief
Obligations Which a Synod Has if it Rightly Wants to Bear
the Name of an Evangelical Lutheran Synod." Doctrinal Essay
at the First Convention of the Iowa District of the Lutheran
Church—Missouri Synod, 1879; Proceedings, pp. 112, 114.

short, everything that is not Christ." There
is need for the Holy Spirit to come and to
send preachers into the world, to uncover
and to punish, not the outwardly gross sins
like adultery and murder, which the world
can know and punish by itself, but the things
it regards as the most precious and its high-
est asset, the claim to piety, holiness, and
the service of God.

So it is a mistake when some wiseacres
maintain now that it is enough for a preacher
to tell everyone what is right and simply
to preach the Gospel, but not to touch the
pope, the bishops, the princes, and other
stations or persons, since this causes unrest
and discord. But what He means is this:
"If you want to preach the Gospel and help
people, you must be sharp and rub salt into
their wounds, showing the reverse side and
denouncing what is not right, like the Masses,
monkery, indulgences, and all their works
and ways, so that these scandals are elimin-
ated and no longer deceive people." There-
fore we must keep up this salting, be on our
guard, and leave no room for such things
to come back or to sneak in secretly. This
is just what will happen if the ministry of
salting is neglected, as it used to be in
Christendom, when the rotten doctrine of
men was in complete charge and ruined
everything; this would not have happened if
the salt had remained. There would have
been no shortage of sound doctrine; for by
the grace of God the Scriptures, the Gospel,
the Sacrament, and the pulpit had remained
in the church, if only the bishops and preach-
ers had done what they should to use these
means for salting whatever belonged to the
old Adam. . . .

There is no greater injury or decay in
Christendom than when the salt, which
should season and salt everything else, has
itself lost its taste. Yet this can happen so
easily. For it is a poison that tastes sweet
and appeals to the old Adam. He does not
like to live dangerously, risking life and limb
or suffering persecutions, shame, and slander.
This makes our bishops and clergy the smart-
est people on earth. Nevertheless, they are
not good enough even to be called salt that
has lost its taste, but they are the very devil
himself. They do not pay attention to their
bishopric; they are the worst kind of per-
secutors themselves. They preach in a
manner calculated to keep them out of
trouble and to gain for them money and
property, honor and power.

Anyone who is supposed to criticize the
whole world — emperors, kings, princes,

wise men, learned men — and say that their way of life is damned before God, has to stick his neck out. But if I am hypocritical and say that everything is all right with them, I get off scot free and keep their favor and acceptance. In the meanwhile I flatter myself that I intend to preach the Gospel, too. Still I have become salt that has lost its taste; for I am letting the people stick in the old delusion of their own flesh, till finally they go to the devil, with me in the lead.

Thus there are many temptations and hindrances for this ministry on both the right and the left side, the temptation of keeping quiet either to escape harm and persecution or to gain popularity, property, or pleasure. Besides, we are weak, lazy, and listless. Therefore we let ourselves be distracted, and we get tired when we see that things do not progress as we would like, when it all seems useless and the people despise our rebukes and even become the worse on account of them.

We must be well armed against all this, therefore, and look at nothing but the commandment of Christ. He entrusts this ministry to us and wants us to open our mouths vigorously, to denounce what must be denounced, heedless of our own danger, inconvenience, advantage, or pleasure, and of other people's malice and contempt. Our consolation is in the fact that He makes us His salt and will sustain us in our salting. He commands us to do that salting with good cheer, regardless of whether the world refuses to tolerate it and persecutes us. Nor should we despair, even though it seems to us that we are getting nowhere. Our pleasure and satisfaction should be whatever He commands us to do. Let Him determine what and how much He wants to accomplish through us. If people refuse to hear or accept it, we are salt nonetheless and have discharged our responsibility. Then we can stand before the judgment seat of God honorably and cheerfully. We can testify that we have spoken out faithfully to every man and have hidden nothing under the bench, leaving them without the excuse that they did not know any better or had not been told.

Luther's Works, C.P.H., 1956, Vol. 21, pp. 55-58.

❁ A Layman Instructs His Pastor Concerning a Romanizing Affliction

A layman (Missouri Synod) who assures us that he has been protesting this Roman-

izing affliction in his congregation for years and that he finally strengthened his testimony by leaving the services before the "gymnastic exercises" of altar boys began "with their slow motion and leaning to the floor" before and after snuffing out candles, has written us: "I asked the Rev. . . ., What do the altar boys bow to? When he replied, They bow to the altar, I answered him with the words of the hymn, which came to me, The heathen in his blindness bows down to wood and stone. Then he said, Don't talk so stupid! I very firmly told him that I would not bow down to any altar, whether made of wood, stone, or of some other material; and this I emphasized very strongly, repeating my statement. I also stated that when we bow in prayer and in going to the Lord's Supper, we bow to the Lord, not to some earthly thing made of wood or stone. Then he said he would take back what he said; but he continued to defend the altar boys."

The layman, in writing this to us, seemed to feel very much alone, wondering what one individual can do "when the pastors support this stuff and talk in favor of it." He expressed the thought that he is about ready to leave his congregation to join another, not of our synod, at some distance from where he lives.

All of which moves us to say, the three friends of Daniel must have felt very much alone when they similarly refused for conscience sake to go along with ever so many of their fellow-Jews (all of them members of the true visible Church of that time) who followed the heathen idolatry of bowing down to an image in their day. But just this bit of history in the life of the Church teaches us that no one is ever really alone if he is on God's side.

There is little that is new or different in the situation before us beside the fact that ever so many members of our church are today *voluntarily* captivated by and aping the idolatrous worship of that modern mystic Babylon, — Rome (Rev. 17, 5), as our layman has also correctly sensed. That, and the fact that responsible officials are doing little or nothing to correct this situation. Indeed, the *Confessional Lutheran* has long since published facts, substantiated by documented proof, showing that our highest officialdom has actually risen to the defense of Romanizing High-Churchism against formal complaint. If anything is clear, it is clear that whatever may under God even-

tually be accomplished within the Missouri Synod over against this evil in our midst, will not only have to be accomplished largely without official help, but despite opposition from the highest official quarter.

This does not mean that the Missouri Synod will in any case retain the Truth. Truth will prevail. But there is no promise anywhere in Scripture that Missouri will always be on its side. We ourselves are Missourians of the Missourians. The writer's roots, also as to the Missourian ministry, go back almost to its beginnings. One of the things that we have learned, precisely as Missourians, is that God does not need Missouri to accomplish His gracious purposes in the world anymore than He once needed the Jewish Church. He is still able of the stones to raise up children unto Himself. But we need God. We need Him most sorely just now. It is highest time to bring forth fruits meet for repentance. Evasions, delaying actions, resolutions which may result in mere compromise will never do. It is still true that the ax is laid to the root of the tree, and every tree which bringeth not forth fruit is hewn down and cast into the fire.

Scripture and the history of the Church are crying at the top of their voice: Missouri, beware!

P. H. B.

PASS YOUR COPY OF THE CONFESSIONAL LUTHERAN ON TO SOME FRIEND

● Altar Boys

Seven Times He Bowled His Head

Last week we attended the Central Regional Pastoral Conference of the Northern Illinois District and as customary there was a Service with Holy Communion on the first morning of the conference.

While the organist was playing a prelude and we were preparing our heart and mind for worship, the sacristy door opened and out came an altar boy dressed in surplice and carrying a candle-lighter. He walked to the sanctuary entrance and stood at the foot of the altar. Reverently he bowed his head as he faced the altar. Then he walked up the altar steps and stood before the altar itself. Here he bowed his head for the second time. Now he was ready to light

the candelabras and communion candles. First he walked to the left side of the altar, and after he had lit the candelabra he stepped towards the center of the altar. There he bowed his head for the third time. He turned to the right and after he had lighted the candelabra he again stepped towards the center of the altar. He now bowed his head for the fourth time. The communion candles must still be lighted. Having lit the candle on the left side, he again stepped towards the center of the altar. There he bowed his head for the fifth time. Now the right candle had to be lit and when he had done that, he again stepped towards the center of the altar. He there bowed his head for the sixth time. The candles were now all lit, but the altar boy had not as yet completed his acts of reverence. Walking down the altar steps, he turned around to face the altar and bowed his head for the seventh time. Thereupon he returned to the sacristy.

A little while later, when the officiating clergy entered in solemn procession, the altar boy walked behind them, and during the service he either sat next to a member of the clergy or knelt with the clergy at the communion rail.

At the end of the service we were treated to the same spectacle. We use the word "spectacle" advisedly. After the officiating clergy had left the sanctuary, the altar boy returned from the sacristy to extinguish the candles. At the entrance of the sanctuary he bowed his head. Standing before the altar itself he bowed his head. After extinguishing the candelabra on the left side he bowed his head. After he had extinguished the candelabra on the right side he bowed his head. After he had extinguished the communion candle on the left side he bowed his head. After he had extinguished the communion candle on the right side he bowed his head. After he had walked down the altar steps and had turned once more towards the altar he bowed his head.

Seven times he bowed his head — seven times — no more and no less.

In the Roman Catholic Church the acolyte or altar boy, the highest of the four "minor orders" in its sacramental system, has the duty to light the candles before the service, to prepare the elements and the altar and in general to assist the priest in celebrating Mass. It is his business to handle the sacred vessels and to respond to the words of the priest in the stead of the people.

"Acolytes' Festival" Within the Missouri Synod

In the May, 1957, *Confessional Lutheran*, we reported on "the first of what is hoped will become an annual series of festivals for the Altar boys of the New York Metropolitan parishes," which was held on Sept. 29, 1956, in the Lutheran Church of St. John the Evangelist of Brooklyn, New York, the Rev. Richard Klopff, pastor. Before us lies the printed program of the "Acolytes' Festival" held in this same church on October 19th of last year.

The "Solemn Votive Mass of the Most Holy Trinity" began with the "entrance of Clergy and Acolytes" in solemn procession, singing "Have mercy on us, God most high, who lift our hearts to Thee; have mercy on us, worms of earth, Most Holy Trinity." There then followed another hymn addressed to the Triune God, a "stational prayer," the sermon, and the hymn "We all believe in One True God." This concluded the first part of the service.

"Ungodly Superstition"

"At the Solemn Mass" the Order of Service as found on page 15 of *The Lutheran Hymnal* was followed to a great extent. But here we would note that at the recitation of the Nicene Creed the congregation was directed to "kneel at the words: And was incarnate by the Holy Ghost of the Virgin Mary and was made man." This is a custom in the Roman Catholic Church which originated in about the fifteenth century.

In an essay entitled "The Pastor's Part of the Liturgy" and delivered by the Rev. Carl Bergen at the First Liturgical Institute of Valparaiso University in 1949 we read: "The minister intones: 'I believe in one God,' raising his hands as at the Gloria, joining his hands at 'one God,' bowing slightly at the word 'God.' He reverences at the words 'Jesus Christ' and at 'is worshipped.' At the words 'and was incarnate — was made man,' he places his hands on the edge of the altar (if corporal is spread, just outside of corporal) and genuflects on right knee (or bows his head reverently), indicating reverence at the mystery of the incarnation. Wismar suggests kneeling or reverently bowing the head from 'and was incarnate' to 'was buried,' in adoration of the entire state of humiliation of Christ. Rising, he folds his hands, crossing himself at 'the life of the world to come.'" (*Essays*, p. 41.)

Here recall how Luther said that he nearly died while celebrating his first Mass because he looked only on the worthiness of his own person, so that he might not make a mistake and thus commit a grievous sin. Behind such bowing and scraping there often lurks nothing but work-righteousness and Luther in this connection rightly speaks of "ungodly superstition."

Censing Offerings and People

"At the Solemn Mass" held in the Brooklyn Missouri Synod Lutheran Church last fall, the recitation of the Nicene Creed was followed by the "Offertory" reading as follows: "Blessed be God the Father, and the only-begotten Son of God: and blessed be the Holy Spirit: for the mercy He hath done to us."

This is the "Offertory" of the Roman Missal for Trinity Sunday and in the Roman Missal such "Offertory" verse precedes the offering of the bread in the words: "Accept, O holy Father, almighty and eternal God, this spotless host, which I, Thy unworthy servant offer unto Thee, my living and true God, to atone for my numberless sins, offenses and negligences; on behalf of all here present and likewise for all faithful Christians living and dead, that it may profit me and them as a means of salvation unto life everlasting." (*My Sunday Missal*, p. 27.) After offering also the cup of wine to the Lord and invoking Him to "bless this sacrifice prepared for the glory of Thy holy name," the Roman Catholic priest then censes the altar and the offering. "At Solemn Mass the celebrant next incenses the offerings and the altar. The priest is then incensed. Afterward the sacred ministers who assist him, the clergy present in the sanctuary, and finally the members of the congregation are incensed." (McGuire, *The Mass*, p. 43.)

In the printed program of the Brooklyn Acolytes' Festival the note is added: "The congregation is seated after the Offertory Verse and rises when the Thurifer turns to cense the people, and remains standing."

Prayer Over the Oblations

Having censed the people, the celebrant at the Brooklyn "Solemn Mass" offered the "Prayer Over the Oblations. Sanctify, we beseech Thee, O Lord our God, the sacrifice of praise which we here offer by the invocation of Thy name: that through the same we may ourselves be made a perfect gift unto Thee for evermore."

Romanists regard their offering of bread and wine in the Mass also as symbolic of the offering of themselves to God. This thought is also very prominent in, and is in reality the very heart of, the Anglican conception of the Eucharist: in the Lord's Supper we offer ourselves as a living sacrifice to God and this our sacrifice is made acceptable to God by our being united with Christ in Holy Communion.

The same thought is also found in *Lively Stones*, by Berthold von Schenk, 1951. "When the offering" (bread and wine and money) "is placed upon the altar, we are on the altar, giving ourselves to God as Jesus gave Himself." (P. 44.) "Thus we identify ourselves, through our offering, with the great sacrifice of Jesus Christ upon the Cross on Mount Calvary." (P. 72.)

In the August, 1955, *Confessional Lutheran*, we reported that a Missouri Synod pastor in a Maundy Thursday celebration of the Eucharist stood before God with a wafer and a cup of wine and asked God: "Receive this spotless host and this chalice of salvation, prepared for the glory of Thy name; that we, Thine unworthy servants, humble in mind and contrite in spirit, may find favor with Thee, O Lord, despite our countless sins, trespasses, and omissions."

At the 1957 Brooklyn Acolytes' Festival the celebrant did not go that far in his false, Romanistic conception of the Lord's Supper. But he spoke of the Eucharist ("the sacrifice of praise which we here offer") as a means "through" which the offerers may themselves "be made a perfect gift" unto God.

That is changing the very nature of the Sacrament, and is, as Luther has well said, "the highest and most damnable idolatry."

The Lord's Supper is not something by which we give something to God or through which the offering of ourselves is made a perfect gift to God. The Lord's Supper is nothing else but God's gift and promise to us in which He assures us of the forgiveness of our sins and seals such forgiveness to us by giving us His body and His blood under the bread and wine.

The Lord's Supper is pure forgiveness — nothing else.

Bringing In False Doctrine

Here we would emphasize that in the New Testament Church rites and ceremonies are in themselves matters of indifference. But they cease to be such when unScriptural ideas are being introduced in our midst

through such rites and ceremonies. Here recall what *Our Sunday Observer*, Feb. 9, 1958, points out, namely, that the Roman Liturgy "was composed when it was the Church's only way of teaching." At that time the Church had to a great extent lost the Gospel of the free grace of God in Christ Jesus and it was generally taught and believed that salvation is by faith and works, mostly, by works. Through the Liturgy this false, un-Scriptural teaching was firmly established throughout the Church and then passed on to succeeding generations.

Those who would introduce the ancient Liturgies, rites, and ceremonies into our circles would therefore do well if they would carefully examine the theological background of the Liturgies, lest by introducing these ancient rites and ceremonies they also introduce the false, un-Scriptural theology of such ancient rites and ceremonies into our circles. Obviously, the leaders of the Liturgical Movement in our midst have not only themselves imbibed such false teaching but are also imparting such false teaching to others.

The Lutheran layman who sent us the program of the Brooklyn Acolytes' Festival closed his accompanying letter with these words: "A Roman Hospital is in the area of St. John's and a statement was made by one of the sisters, 'Isn't it wonderful how the Lutheran Church is finally coming back to the true Church.' Need I say more!"

D.

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● Concerning the Use of Incense in the Church

Incense and Processions are certainly middle things. Incense even has a nice significance. It symbolizes the prayer rising to heaven. David prays: "Let my prayers be set before Thee as incense, and the lifting up of my hands as the evening sacrifice," Ps. 141, 2, whence the versicle of the Evening Service or Vespers in our English Hymnal has been taken. And how often incense is mentioned besides this in the Old Testament! But when one now knows and con-

siders what humbug (Unfug) the Roman Catholic practices with incense, for what purpose it uses it, what superstitious thoughts it associates with it, which then sway simple people, then we must again say that one should leave such ceremonies to the Roman and high-church Anglican Church and not again introduce them into the Lutheran Church and disturb Christian people thereby. [To which one might add that there would be as little justification for the use of incense in church services today simply because it once had its place in the liturgical service of the Old Testament as there would be for introducing the evening sacrifice of that time. — P.H.B.]

The Lutheran Church has now existed for more than 400 years, and Luther retained some things temporarily because the Gospel was always his concern and when the Gospel was left free he was willing to endure many things for a while. We repeat what we have already said once: Luther was a Reformer, not a revolutionary. He said: "We for the time being shall try everything; whatever is good we shall keep." (*Nos interim omnia probabimus, quod bonum est, tenebimus.*) (St. Louis Edit., X, 2238.) In his *Formula Missae* of 1523, "An Order for conducting Mass and Going to the Table of the Lord," he gives the assurance "that we are not thinking, nor ever have thought, to do away with every external service, but to cleanse (sweep) the one which has hitherto been in use but which has been corrupted by many additions, and to show what is true Christian custom." (X, 2235.)

... Whoever knows Catholic usage and doctrine also knows that processions with incense and song by specially vested men and choir boys belongs to the pomp and show of the Roman Church, with which it would make an outward impression, that they are instituted especially in the interest of the Mass and that the processions of the Corpus Christi Festival like this festival itself, very particularly serve the transubstantiation doctrine; and he will recognize that misgivings against such things are justified. . . . One should well consider in general that divine services are not to be made into a show, so that people ask already beforehand, what will perhaps be heard and seen in the church today. This directs attention away from the chief thing, the Word. — —

L. Fuerbringer, in an article on "The Proper Middleground in the Liturgy and the

Order of Service," *Concordia Theological Monthly*, Vol. V, pp. 523-525.

**PLEASE RENEW YOUR SUBSCRIPTION
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● **"Keep Me From the Snares Which
They Have Laid for Me!"**

The October, 1957, *Seminarian*, Student Journal of Theological Opinion and Discussion at Concordia Seminary in St. Louis, has an article entitled "The Ministry — Static or Dynamic." There we read as follows: "Have you ever compared the definition of the Church given by the Augsburg Confession, the Church is the *Congregation of Saints*, in which the Gospel is rightly taught and the Sacraments are rightly administered. Father Connell says that the Church is *The Congregation of all Baptized persons, united in the same true faith, the same sacrifice, and the same Sacraments, under the authority of the Sovereign Pontiff and the bishops in communion with him.* Aside from certain wording, what is the main difference? The Church of Rome makes the Ministerial Hierarchy a necessary mark or essence of the Church." (The words we have underlined are in smaller print in the original.)

The *Seminarian* contends that the "main difference" between the Lutheran and the Roman "definition of the Church" is that the latter makes the "Ministerial Hierarchy a necessary mark or essence of the Church."

Thereby the *Seminarian* clearly shows that it neither understands the Augsburg Confession nor knows the real difference between the Lutheran and Roman conception of the Church.

Article VII of the Augsburg Confession

Article VII of the Augsburg Confession is entitled "Of the Church" and Article VIII is entitled "What the Church is."

Article VIII says that "the Church properly is the congregation of saints and true believers," or, as the German has it, "the Christian Church is in reality nothing else but the congregation of all believers and saints."

Of the Church itself Article VII says: "Also they teach that one holy Church is

to continue forever. The Church is the congregation of saints, in which the Gospel is rightly taught and the Sacraments are rightly administered." The original German, literally translated, reads: "Also they teach that there must always be and remain one holy Christian Church, which is the congregation of all believers, among whom the Gospel is rightly preached and the holy Sacraments are administered according to the Gospel." (*Triglotta*, p. 46-47.)

Here as Dr. Pieper has pointed out in *Das Grundbekenntnis der evangelisch-lutherischen Kirche*, 1880, p. 19-20, the Augsburg Confession says three things. "1) *The Church will never perish.* . . . 2) It is taught, what the Church is, namely, *the congregation of believers.* As many people as have been truly regenerated by the Holy Spirit and believe on Christ as their Savior: they belong to the Christian Church; they constitute the one holy Christian Church. . . . 3) It is said, what the marks are by which it is recognized, *where the Christian Church is.* These marks are: the pure preaching of the Gospel and the right administration of the Sacraments."

Accordingly, the Church is not "defined" in the whole sentence: "The Church is the congregation of saints, in which the Gospel is rightly taught and the Sacraments are rightly administered." The Church is however "defined," or *what the Church is* is really said, in the short clause: "The Church is the congregation of saints," or, as the German has it: "One holy Christian Church . . . is the congregation of all believers."

In explanation, the Apology therefore says: "When the Church is defined, (German: when one would really say what the Church is), it is necessary to define that which is the living body of Christ, and which is in name and in fact the Church (which is called the body of Christ, and has fellowship not alone in outward signs, but has the gifts in the heart, namely, the Holy Ghost and faith)." (*Triglotta*, p. 231.)

According to the Augsburg Confession the Church is "defined" as the "congregation of all believers" — no more and no less.

The Roman Definition of the Church

This Scriptural definition of the Church was formulated by the Lutherans in direct opposition to the Roman definition or conception of the Church.

As stated by the Roman *Catechism of Christian Doctrine* (prepared and enjoined by Order of the Third Plenary Council of

Baltimore) "the Church is the congregation of all those who profess the faith of Christ, partake of the same Sacraments, and are governed by their lawful pastors under one visible Head."

In other words, according to Roman theology the Church is that *external* organization or congregation of all those baptized persons who profess adherence to the faith of Christ as taught in the Roman Catholic Church and who under the jurisdiction of the pope and their lawful pastors have fellowship in the outward signs or sacraments of the Church — all those who participate in the Roman Catholic Sacraments.

Expressed in simple words: According to Lutheran teaching the Church is the whole number of true believers in Christ; it embraces all believers and only believers. According to Roman Catholic teaching the Church is the whole number of those who under the pope make use of the means of grace; it embraces both believers and hypocrites.

The Missouri Synod Itself Must Bear the Blame

That the *Seminarian* could falsely define the Church as "the Congregation of Saints, in which the Gospel is rightly taught and the Sacraments are rightly administered" is obviously due to the fact that this false definition of the Church was legitimized within the Missouri Synod by the St. Paul convention in 1956. *ART VII; AUGUSTANA CONFESSIO*

The peculiar notion that the Means of Grace and the Office of the Ministry, and especially the use of the Means of Grace must be regarded as constituent parts of the essence of the Church (must be mentioned when defining *what the Church is*) was and is the peculiar theology of Loehe and his followers within the Iowa Synod and within the American Lutheran Church. They would define the Church as *the whole number of believers who use the means of grace.* Followers of Loehe have called the first part of this definition ("the whole number of believers") the "invisible side" of the Church, and the last part of the definition ("who use the means of grace") they have designated as the "visible side" of the Church.

[What is wrong with this definition? All believers use the means of grace. But not all who use the means of grace are believers, for hypocrites and ungodly also use the means of grace.]

tion of this false teaching and false definition or conception of the Church the President of the Missouri Synod and the whole St. Louis Faculty said: "The Visible Side of the Church. We agree with the essay that this is a matter of terminology. There is no false doctrine implied." (1951 ACDP Report, p. 38; 1956 ACDP Report, p. 28.) The last statement, "There is no false doctrine implied," is SIMPLY NOT TRUE.

Un-Scriptural Teaching Legitimatized

The St. Paul convention of the Missouri Synod, in 1956, over the objection especially of a St. Louis Faculty member of its own Convention Committee on Intersynodical and Doctrinal Matters, contrary to Article VIII of the Synodical Constitution (Article VIII reads: "All matters of doctrine and of conscience shall be decided only by the Word of God. All other matters shall be decided by a majority vote.") by a mere majority vote approved the Report of the Advisory Committee on Doctrine and Practice.

Then and there the Missouri Synod gave up all that it had ever confessed over against the doctrinal aberrations of Loehe and of the Iowa Synod. Loehe's theology had vanquished the Scriptural theology enunciated by Walther and Pieper, and Concordia Seminary of St. Louis had capitulated to Wartburg Seminary of Dubuque. Missouri had sold its birth-right for a mess of unionistic pottage.

By approving the Report of the Advisory Committee on Doctrine and Practice the Missouri Synod opened the door wide to that false, un-Lutheran and un-Scriptural conception of the Church, which is the real source of all un-Scriptural doctrine and practice now plaguing our church-body and which in the course of history has denied and subverted the very heart of the Gospel — justification by faith alone — and has robbed myriads of souls of their eternal salvation.

High-Churchism — Broad-Churchism — Revivalism — Methodism — are all blood brothers and are running wild throughout our synod. They are all the children of that un-Scriptural doctrine of the Church now legitimized within our church-body by the St. Paul convention at the instigation of its own leaders.

May God in His grace prevent the St. Paul convention's approval of the ACDP Report from taking its natural course and finally destroying all evangelical truth within the Missouri Synod! All of us, and especially the

future pastors of our congregations now studying in St. Louis, should therefore pray: "Keep me from the snares which they have laid for me!"

D.

PROMPTLY RENEW YOUR SUBSCRIPTION TO CONFESSIONAL LUTHERAN

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● St. Louis Continues to Advocate Celibacy

Like Professor Like Student

In 1950, when Dr. A. C. Piepkorn was called as professor at Concordia Seminary in St. Louis, he wrote as member of the editorial staff of *Una Sancta* as follows: "We believe that provision should be made for consecrating to the service of Christ within the framework of the Church of the Augsburg Confession the lives of those men and women to whom God has imparted the virtue to live virgin lives. . . . We earnestly pray for vocations to the communal service of God here and abroad in the ministry of mercy, in the ministry of teaching, in the ministry of intercession, and in the Sacred Ministry of the Holy Gospel." (*Una Sancta*, Advent, 1950, p. 3.)

In May, 1956, the *Seminarian* (A Theological Student's Journal of Concordia Seminary in St. Louis) said editorially: "Celibacy, for one thing, ought to be given serious consideration in the ministry." (P. 4.) In the same issue we read: "One could go so far as to say that a Church in which the *Charisma* of Christian celibacy had perished completely would be a Church suffering from spiritual atrophy and threatened with spiritual death. . . . The Church has the obligation to provide a situation (perhaps in the form of orders with assigned tasks) in which young men are also encouraged and given opportunity to use this gift." (P. 42.)

["To promote interest, study, and understanding of the vocation to the religious life in community in the Church of the Augsburg Confession, and to foster the establishment

of religious communities" the "Fellowship of St. Augustine" was organized at the Institute of Liturgical Studies of Valparaiso University, held at Detroit in June, 1956.]

In the January, 1957, *Concordia Theological Monthly*, edited by the Faculty of Concordia Seminary in St. Louis, Dr. A. C. Piepkorn published a review clearly advocating celibacy and monasticism and from this review it is obvious that this teacher of Symbolics at Concordia Seminary does not understand the Lutheran Confessions and would have them say the exact opposite of what they actually confess. (Cf. *Conf. Luth.*, May, 1957, pp. 53-55.)

The latest advocacy of celibacy published in St. Louis is found in the October, 1957, *Seminarian*, under the title "A Vocation to Community."

The Latest Word on Celibacy in Community

Here are a few excerpts from that article.

"Certainly the Church recognizes the vocation of the celibate life among the faithful. One need not search far to find the basis for this vocation in Sacred Scriptures." Here the article refers to Matt. 19:12 and I Cor. 7:7 and then continues: "The Apology of the Augsburg Confession certainly recognizes this special gift of God when it states, 'Virginity is advised, but to those who have the gift' (xxvii, par. 27). In fact, the celibate life is one to be desired as the Apology further points out." There then follows the statement of the Apology in which virginity is declared to be a "more excellent gift than marriage" and then it is concluded, "Since, then, the celibate life is a special gift and blessing of God, the Church receives it and uses it to His glory."

After citing I Cor. 7:32ff, the article says that "a life of complete, unhindered service to Christ and His Church is the goal and intention of the celibate life in the community. Religious communities are either active or contemplative. In both types there would seem to be unlimited field of opportunity for service for those faithful Christians who would so direct their lives." Here the author refers to mission activity and says: "Men working as a unit free from environmental and financial concerns implicit in married life could be most effective. Also in education where there is a dire need for workers but a lack of financial resources to support them, a teaching community would seem to have potentialities. On the other

hand, the contemplative community could enrich the Church with worship as well as offer a setting for solid Lutheran scholarship. Not to be overlooked is the contribution of the community's prayer life to the Church. Christians have always placed an optimum value on the prayers of the righteous man (James 5. 16.) In the ordered life of the community the faithful follow in a very special way St. Paul's exhortation to pray without ceasing."

Since this article refers to the Lutheran Confessions, therefore the question arises: What does the Lutheran Church in her Confessions actually teach concerning vocations to community life and concerning the vow of celibacy?

In What Respect is Virginity Praised?

The Apology says: "Obedience, poverty, and celibacy, provided the latter is not impure, are, as exercises, adiaphora [in which we are not to look for either sin or righteousness]. And for this reason the saints can use these without impiety, just as Bernard, Francis, and other holy men used them. And they used them on account of bodily advantage, that they might have more leisure to teach and to perform other godly offices, and not that the works themselves are, by themselves, works that justify or merit eternal life. . . . And it is creditable that in some places there are also at present good men, who use these observances without wicked opinions [without hypocrisy and with the understanding that they do not regard their monasticism as holiness]." (*Triglotta*, p. 427.)

Furthermore, the Apology says that "virginity is a more excellent gift than marriage" and then explains, "Neither does Christ or Paul praise virginity because it justifies, but because it is freer and less distracted with domestic occupations, in praying, teaching, [writing], serving. For this reason Paul says, I Cor. 7:32: *He that is unmarried careth for the things which belong to the Lord.* Virginity, therefore, is praised on account of meditation and study. Thus Christ does not simply praise those *who make themselves eunuchs*, but adds, *for the kingdom of heaven's sake*, i.e., that they may have leisure to learn or teach the Gospel. He does not say that virginity merits the remission of sins or salvation." (*Triglotta*, p. 373, 375.)

Thus the Lutheran Church to some extent praises virginity. But at the same time it

emphasizes that God created man for procreation; that the natural desire of sex for sex is an ordinance of God in nature which cannot be changed without a special work of God; and that not all men are fit for a single life since continence does not belong to all.

The Divine Ordinance

Speaking of the "marriage of priests," the Augsburg Confession (Article xxiii) says that it is lawful for priests to contract marriage: "First, because Paul says I Cor. 7:2, 9: *To avoid fornication, let every man have his own wife.* Also: *It is better to marry than to burn.* Secondly, Christ says, Matt. 19:11: *All men cannot receive this saying,* where He teaches that not all men are fit to lead a single life; God created man for procreation, Gen. 1:28. Nor is it in man's power, without a singular gift and work of God, to alter this creation. [For it is manifest, and many have confessed that no good, honest, chaste life, no Christian, sincere, upright conduct has resulted (from the attempt), but a horrible, fearful unrest and torment of conscience has been felt by many until the end.] Therefore, those who are not fit to lead a single life ought to contract matrimony. For no man's law, no vow, can annul the commandment and ordinance of God." (Triglotta, p. 61.)

Speaking of "monastic vows," the Augsburg Confession (Article xxvii) says: "The commandment of God is, I Cor. 7:2: *To avoid fornication, let every man have his own wife.* Nor is it the commandment only, but also the creation and ordinance of God, which forces those to marry who are not excepted by a singular work of God, according to the text Gen. 2:18: *It is not good that the man should be alone.*" (Triglotta, p. 79.)

In full agreement with all this the Apology says: "Gen. 1:28 teaches that men were created to be fruitful, and that one sex in a proper way should desire the other. For we are speaking not of concupiscence, which is sin, but of that appetite which was to have been in nature in its integrity [which would have existed in nature even if it had remained uncorrupted], which they call physical love. And this love of one sex for the other is truly a divine ordinance. But since this ordinance of God cannot be changed without an extraordinary work of God, it follows that the right to contract marriage cannot be removed by statutes or vows." (Triglotta, p. 365.)

"A natural right is truly a divine right, because it is an ordinance divinely impressed upon nature. But inasmuch as this right cannot be changed without an extraordinary work of God, it is necessary that the right to contract marriage remains, because the natural desire of sex is an ordinance of God in nature, and for this reason is a right; otherwise, why would both sexes have been created? And we are speaking, as it has been said above, not of concupiscence, which is sin, but of that desire which they call physical love [which would have existed between man and woman even though their nature had remained pure], which concupiscence has not removed from nature, but inflames, so that now it has greater need of a remedy, and marriage is necessary not only for the sake of procreation, but also as a remedy [to guard against sins]. These things are clear, and so well established that they can in no way be overthrown." (Triglotta, p. 367.)

Not all are fit for celibacy or suited for a single life, for the gift of continence is not given to all. "If continence were possible to all, it would not require a peculiar gift. But Christ shows that it has need of a peculiar gift; therefore it does not belong to all. God wishes the rest to use the common law of nature which He has instituted. For God does not wish His ordinances, His creations to be despised. He wishes men to be chaste in this way, that they use the remedy divinely presented, just as He wishes to nourish our life in this way, that we use food and drink." (Triglotta, p. 369.)

True Service to God

The Lutheran Church finally rejects the idea that celibacy in community life is true service to God. On this matter the Augsburg Confession (Article xxvii) says: "The precepts of God and the true service of God are obscured when men hear that only monks are in a state of perfection. For Christian perfection is to fear God from the heart, and yet to conceive great faith, and to trust that for Christ's sake we have a God who has been reconciled, to ask of God, and assuredly to expect His aid in all things that, according to our calling, are to be done; and meanwhile, to be diligent in outward good works, and to serve our calling. In these things consist the true perfection and the true service of God. It does not consist in celibacy. . . . Men have hid themselves in monasteries. This they called fleeing from the world, and seeking a kind of life which would be

more pleasing to God. Neither did they see that God ought to be served in those commandments which He himself has given, and not in commandments devised by men. A good and perfect kind of life is that which has for it the commandment of God." (*Triglotta*, p. 83.)

The Apology then closes its confession regarding monastic vows in these words: "The holy men who have lived in these kinds of life must necessarily have learned, confidence in such observance having rejected, that they had the remission of sins freely; that for Christ's sake through mercy they would obtain eternal life, and not for the sake of these services [therefore godly persons who were saved and continued to live in monastic life had finally come to this, namely, that they despaired of their monastic life, despised all their works as dung, condemned all their hypocritical service of God, and held fast to the promise of grace in Christ, as in the example of St. Bernard, saying, *Perdite vixi*, I have lived in a sinful way]; because God only approves services instituted by His Word, which services avail when used in faith." (*Triglotta*, p. 443.)

Purge Out the Whole Leaven

The other day we were told on good authority that responsible officials are removing an instructor from the St. Louis Seminary Faculty because he denies the Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch. If the report is true, we hope and pray that responsible synodical officials will not stop there but will carefully investigate all charges which during the last years have been raised against certain St. Louis Faculty members and will take the proper action, if they find that they are advocating monasticism and the celibate life, or are teaching that we should pray for the souls of the dead at the Lord's Supper, or that the Body of Christ is present on the altar prior to the distribution, or any other Roman doctrine.

Let's purge out this whole Roman leaven which has infected not only Faculty members but also the student-body of St. Louis! Responsible officials owe this to God and to the congregations which they serve that they see to it that future pastors of these congregations are truly Evangelical Lutheran pastors and are not Roman Catholic priests parading under the cloak of Lutheranism.

D.

What Our Readers Say

"It is becoming increasingly apparent to me that what I am just now learning about Missouri Synod has been common knowledge to the C.L.P.B. for a number of years. The revelation has not been easy for me to accept, because it was to Missouri that I first turned from Modernist unbelief, and I suppose that I may have considered it doctrinally infallible. What is most heartening to me is the realization that in the C.L.P.B. are Christians who will yield none of the 'eternal, immutable truth of God for the sake of temporal peace, tranquility, and unity,' and will suffer personal sacrifice and even persecution for what they believe. Would that in some way we laymen, who have nothing to lose, could take this abuse upon ourselves and spare a Gospel pastor the ignominy of being drummed out to an obscure outpost where his witness will not be heard! . . . like Gideon's army." — Medical Doctor, Illinois.

"I first came across your paper, the *Confessional Lutheran*, in the library of . . . while attending a circuit meeting. When my pastor saw me glancing through it, he advised me this was not for me. . . . I was again introduced to your paper by a widow whose husband had died while serving in the ministry and she still continued to receive your paper. I had the occasion to read several more issues. I believe that if a man is to serve his church and God's kingdom to the best of his talents he must keep well informed. Thus I am enclosing \$5.00 for a year's subscription and a back order of the year 1957. . . . The Lutheran church of which you wrote in one of your issues is in our area. Enclosed is a program from their Acolytes' Festival. . . . A Roman hospital is in the area and a statement was made by one of the sisters, 'Isn't it wonderful how the Lutheran Church is finally coming back to the true Church!' Need I say more?" — A layman, New York.

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MOTTO: Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you: but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment." — 1 Cor. 1, 10.

"We have no intention of yielding sight of the eternal, immutable truth of God for the sake of temporal peace, tranquility, and unity (which, moreover, is not in our power to do). Nor would such peace and unity, since it is devised against the truth and for its suppression, have any permanency. Still less are we inclined to adorn and conceal a corruption of the pure doctrine and manifest, condemned errors. But we entertain heartfelt pleasure and love for, and are on our part sincerely inclined and anxious to advance, that unity according to our utmost power, by which His glory remains to God uninjured, nothing of the divine truth of the Holy Gospel is surrendered, no room is given to the least error, poor sinners are brought to true, genuine repentance, raised up by faith, confirmed in new obedience, and thus justified and eternally saved alone through the sole merit of Christ." — Concluding Statement of the Formula of Concord concerning the Requirements of Confessional Fellowship among Lutherans of the Augsburg Confession. Trigl. Conc., p. 1095.

"It has been our purpose . . . that all unlawful, doubtful, suspicious, and condemned doctrines, wherever and in whatever books they may be found, and whoever may have written them, or even now may be disposed to defend them, might be exposed, distinctly repudiated, so that every one may be faithfully warned against the errors, which are spread here and there in the writings of some theologians, and no one be misled in this matter by the reputation (authority) of any man." — Formula of Concord (Thorough Declaration), Comprehensive Summary; Trigl. Conc., P. 857.

"These highly important matters (the business of religion) concern also the common people and laymen (as they are called), who, inasmuch as they are Christians, must for their salvation distinguish between pure and false doctrine." — Formula of Concord (Thorough Declaration), Comprehensive Summary; Trigl. Conc., P. 853.

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NUMBER 5

In THIS ISSUE: Shepherd, Hireling, Wolf, and Sheep — Error in "Portals of Prayer" — "You Are That Which You Receive" — "Daily Service in Every Parish" — "The Church Through the Ages" — A "Roman Catholic" Catechism Published by a Missouri Synod Congregation — A Creeping Plague — Scriptural Doctrine of Confessional Church Fellowship Rejected in LUTHERAN WITNESS — Did Job Proclaim the Resurrection (19:26ff)? — What Our Readers Say — The Chicago Study Club

● Shepherd, Hireling, Wolf, and Sheep

In the Gospel for the Second Sunday after Easter (John 10, 11-16) we have the lovely Parable of Christ as the Good Shepherd. The Hireling, the Wolf, and the Sheep complete the picture.

In the day of Christ, the Pharisees who had falsely arrogated "authority" to themselves as leaders of the established Church

and who used the prestige of their position to destroy the flock, represented the "wolves" of that time (Mt. 7, 15; Mt. 15, 9; Mt. 23, 13, 15; John 9, 34). But Christ is the ideal of every true pastor, and there have been destructive wolves in the Church's outward fellowship at all times. The Apostle Paul had to warn the elders of the congregation in Ephesus: "After my departure shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men

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"As soon as we look more to our synod than to the
invisible kingdom of God, the kingdom of grace and salva-
tion, we begin to be a sect. For this is really the essence
of sectarianism that one has his eye on his little fellowship
above all, even though the kingdom of God may suffer
harm thereby." "That preacher is no true preacher who
merely seeks to fanaticize his congregation for the Lutheran
Church, or for the Missouri Synod, or, worse still, only for
the Iowa District. Such men are bad preachers. They must
rather direct people to Christ and say: See, we preach the
pure Word of God, in which the everlasting Gospel of
Christ is continued; that is why you should adhere to us,
and therefore we say, Leave us as soon as we no longer do
this! For salvation by no means depends on us, nor also on
the Missouri Synod. So if it no longer preaches the pure
Word of God, then it is worthy of nothing but that one
forsake it." — Dr. C. F. W. Walther, "Concerning the Chief
Obligations Which a Synod Has if it Rightly Wants to Bear
the Name of an Evangelical Lutheran Synod," Doctrinal Essay
at the First Convention of the Iowa District of the Lutheran
Church—Missouri Synod, 1879; Proceedings, pp. 112, 114.

arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away
disciples after them." (Acts 20, 29, 30.) And
St. Peter wrote to the Christian congregations
in Asia Minor in his day (II Pet. 2, 1-2):
"There shall be false teachers among you,
who privily shall bring in damnable heresies,
even denying the Lord that bought them, and
bring upon themselves swift destruction. And
many shall follow their pernicious ways; by
reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil
spoken of." Ever since the early middle ages,
the Roman papacy, arrogating unwarranted
power to itself in the Church like the Phar-
isee of old, has been spoiling the flock of
Christendom in the Catholic Church. And
Modern Protestantism (also "Lutheranism"),
too, is full of heresies. Loud-spoken apostates
sit in the highest seats of the council of
Modern "Ecumenicism," with the result that
the way of truth is still evil spoken of; nor
is there a lack of such as follow their per-
nicious ways. Also in the Missouri Synod
voices are actually raised for making com-
mon cause with the heretic World Council of
Churches and the false "Lutheran" con-
glomeration known as its World Federation
which is associated with it, and the way of
truth is evil spoken of also among us (for
instance in the liberal *American Lutheran*
and in the theologically half-literate *St. Louis
Seminarian*) because of our refusal to barter
our birthright for a mess of "ecumenical"
pottage.

Shepherd, hireling, wolf, and sheep, —
this remains the constant picture of the
Church as to its outward fellowship. In
view of such circumstances, every pastor
among us should be asking himself, Am I a
true shepherd; or am I a mere hireling, —
one who can stand by and see the flock com-
mitted to him threatened, and never so much
as raise a warning voice? And every member
among us should be asking himself, Am I an
intelligent and sensible sheep, — such as
Christ claims for His own? One which can
and does distinguish the voice of the true
shepherd from that of a stranger and refuses
to follow the latter?

P. H. B.

❶ Error in "Portals of Prayer"

"Portals of Prayer" (Vol. XXI — No. 153)
Daily Devotions from April 15 to June 5, 1958,
from Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis,
Missouri, contains some doctrinal error of
which Christians must be warned.

On page 53 (devotion for Thurs., June 5)
the text (Matth. 16:18) speaks of the holy

Christian Church, the Communion of saints, the invisible Church. When the author attempts to apply the text to the Church Visible, he makes his comments rather confusing and void of comfort.

"The church for which He gave Himself," the Communion of saints, is the church of which Jesus said that it "will never perish." In order to survive, it does not need to exist "as an organized force."

The author apparently thinks that the visible Church, an "organized force," has the promise of Christ that it "will never perish." If he did not, the following sentence would lead him into an absurdity of his own making: "Of course, this is true only of the church as such — not necessarily of every baptized member of the same." Think of it. A baptized member of the true (invisible) Church of Christ, a believer, perishing! See John 3, 16.

We must say that page 7 of this booklet, which treats also of the Church, is much better. It rightly defines the Church. But page 53 is a denial of page 7.

It's Not in the Text

Look at page 52. The "Christian Church," the true catholic (universal) Church, is depicted as (visible!) "denominations, from the Roman Catholic to the Dutch Reformed." On this page, the doctrine of the invisible catholic (universal) Church is first twisted into a doctrine of a visible, organized, Church. Then this is twisted to give the Church the right to cross the Church — State barrier to take "concerted" action with regard to "segregationist legislation." All this in the name of Eph. 1:10!

Proper guidelines for Christian thinking with regard to the racial segregation issue: There is no segregation in the true Church of Christ, the invisible Church, Gal. 3:28. Visible, organized, Christian groups are to settle all problems that arise in their midst not decided by the Word of God according to the law of Christian love; they are not to try to force the State to follow this law. The State is to settle all problems that arise in its midst according to the light of human reason. Individual Christians may make the weight of their convictions in such matters felt in the Church, as church members; and in government, as citizens.

Over-running Enthusiasm

"Great church meetings which are attended by representatives from all over the world," are suggested as "a foretaste of that

grand assembly" in heavenly glory. The assemblies of the Lutheran World Federation and of the World Council of Churches (with a Communist spokesman on its Executive committee) — a foretaste of heaven! We sincerely believe that one of heaven's great blessings will be the final deliverance of the faithful from the machinations of church politicians.

More Confusion

On page 50, visible denominations and the (invisible) Church of Christ are so hopelessly confused with each other as to make the entire page, except the Bible verse, valueless, if not dangerous, reading.

On page 46, the author says: "The strengthening of our faith and the practice of Christian love requires association with other believers. Some of the early church fathers even went so far as to say that outside the church there was no salvation."

The dictum: "There is no salvation outside the Church," applies only to the invisible Church, the Communion of saints. The suggestion that it applies to the visible Church, or churches, can easily lead souls to false security and damnation.

Furthermore, there is a sinful *association* or *fellowship*, with the traitors and saboteurs to be found within the visible Church (I John 2:18-19; 4:1), which God expressly forbids, Matth. 7:15; Rom. 16:17. Recommended reading: Catechism, questions 175-186.

T'was Bound to Happen

The four pages of "Portals of Prayer" to which we have referred present a sad state of affairs. This is the form in which unionistic false doctrine is seeping down from clergy to laity in the Missouri Synod in these days of doctrinal indecision. All this confusion would not have been turned loose on the devout of the Missouri Synod if the Statementarians, with their false and unionistic doctrine of the Church, had been suspended in 1945, as provided in Synod's Constitution.

A. V. K.

PROMPTLY RENEW YOUR

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● "You Are That Which You Receive"

In *Portals of Prayer*, No. 153, April 15-June 5, 1958, p. 47, Rev. Herbert Lindemann in connection with the Lord's Supper says: "What St. Augustine said to his people is mystically and wonderfully true: 'You are that which you receive, namely, the body of Christ.'"

Addressing "them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus" (I Cor. 1:2), the Apostle Paul said of all true believers: "Ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular (individually)," I Cor. 12:27. It is by faith and by faith alone that we become members of Christ's body (Gal. 3:26-28) and are knit together in the *mystical* body of Christ. For "if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His," Rom. 8:9.

Portals of Prayer says that it is mystically and wonderfully true that "You are that which you receive, namely, the body of Christ." If that statement is true, then we are faced with this dilemma:

Either, we *receive only* the mystical body of Christ and *do not receive* the true Body of Christ which was given into death for us.

Or, we *actually are* the true Body of Christ which was given into death for us on Calvary's cross.

Whoever contends that the statement cited in *Portals of Prayer* is true must necessarily hold — if he does not wish to deny the Real Presence of Christ's true Body and Blood in the Lord's Supper — some such false, un-Scriptural teaching as was first enunciated in our circles by Pastor F. H. Lindemann in the March, 1948, *American Lutheran*. Contending that "we are dealing here with a spiritual-physical phenomenon," Pastor F. H. Lindemann said: "In the Lord's Supper the Body that is in heaven is present on earth. As the believers eat this Body *the Church becomes the Body*. The believers *become one body* by eating the Bread, and *this one body is the Body of Christ*. Still more wonderful, the believer becomes a member of Christ's Body in the Lord's Supper not only according to the soul but *also according to his physical body*." (Our emphasis. Cf. *Conf. Luth.*, 1948, p. 109-111.)

In 1948 we wrote: A question which necessarily raises itself at every such public offense against the doctrine which we have learned is: What will be done about it by the President of our synod, who is specifically responsible for the maintenance of doctrinal unity in our midst? Now that this un-

Scriptural, Roman Catholic teaching is being spread in the daily devotions of our congregational members, is there anything that will move responsible synodical officials to take appropriate action in this matter?

D.

PLEASE RENEW YOUR SUBSCRIPTION TO THE CONFESSIONAL LUTHERAN PROMPTLY

● "Daily Services in Every Parish"

In the *Portals of Prayer*, to which we referred in a previous article, we read: "The church through the ages has held daily services in every parish, and this is still the intention of liturgical churches today." (P. 48.)

Joseph Kramp, "one of the pioneers of the liturgical movement" in the Roman Catholic Church, has rightly said: "In the early Christian centuries the Sacrifice of the Mass was not celebrated daily but whenever it was celebrated all who were present received Holy Communion." (*Live the Mass*, copyrighted 1954, p. 281.) Again he says: "Mass was not celebrated daily in the early times but seemingly only on Sundays and certain other days. Hence from the desire of the faithful to receive Communion more frequently there arose the custom of taking to their homes the Bread of Life to reserve it there and to receive it in the morning before all other food. Thus by the second century we have record of daily Communion becoming a custom before daily Mass. Daily Communion in this manner flourished especially in days of persecution. For when the Christians were likely at any moment to have their faith put to the test by the order to sacrifice to idols, they wished to be fortified by that 'bread of the strong' which comes from the altar of the true God." (P. 284.)

Crass superstition was often connected with the early practice of "daily Communion" and the "daily Mass" was not introduced into the Christian Church until the days of persecution, approximately about a hundred or more years after the apostles. There is therefore no evidence that "the church through the ages has held daily services in every parish."

It is, however, true that it is "the intention of liturgical churches" to introduce not only the "daily Mass" but also "daily Communion" into every parish.

Why? According to Thomas Aquinas, the theologian *par excellence* of Roman Catholicism, "The Unity of the Mystical Body is the consequence of the Real Body received sacramentally." Pope Pius XII in advocating more frequent communicating on the part of all Catholics therefore said: "In the sacred Eucharist the faithful . . . are united with one another and with the divine Head of the whole Body."

In *Una Sancta*, Advent, 1950, the whole Editorial Staff (Dr. A. C. Piepkorn was a member at that time) said: "We stand for the return of the Sacrament of the Altar . . . at least every Sunday and major holy day. . . . We earnestly pray for the vocations to the communal service of God here and abroad in the ministry of mercy, in the ministry of teaching, in the ministry of intercession, and in the Sacred Ministry of the Holy Gospel." *Una Sancta*, Michaelmas, 1946, favors the return of religious orders, where "a rich liturgical life would be developed with daily communion and the observance of the Liturgical Hours."

In the March, 1948, *American Lutheran* Rev. F. H. Lindemann, speaking of "the communion that unites the members of the Body with the Head and with each other," said that it is effected and maintained "by the Sacraments. God has not told us that it is effected in any other way. . . . The Koinonia is effected by the Sacraments and not by any other application of the Word." (Our emphasis.)

In the Eucharistic Prayer compiled by Dr. A. C. Piepkorn and published in *Una Sancta*, Pentecost, 1947, the "celebrant" prays: "Grant that all we who are partaking of this altar . . . be made one Body with Christ and with all Thy holy Church." (Our emphasis.)

And the *Seminarian* (Student's Journal at Concordia Seminary in St. Louis) said in its February, 1955, issue: "By the Holy Communion of the Church we enter into Christ's holy sacrifice and become members of His Body." (Our emphasis.)

By eating Christ's Body in the Lord's Supper we become members of the Body of Christ — that is the very heart of the whole Modern Liturgical and *Una Sancta* Movement.
D.

③ "The Church Through the Ages"

In *Portals of Prayer* (No. 153, p. 48) we read: "The church through the ages has held daily services in every parish, and this is still the intention of liturgical churches today."

If this be true, we wonder where we have been all the while. We know of only one church which has been holding "daily services in every parish" even in our own age. And the Lutheran Church has in its Confessions told the bishops of that church (*and keeps telling them this*): "We do not concede to them that they are the Church, and in truth they are not the Church; nor will we listen to those things which, under the name of Church, they enjoin or forbid. For, thank God, today a child of seven years old knows what the Church is, namely, the holy believers and lambs who hear the voice of the Shepherd. For the children pray thus: "I believe in one holy Christian Church. This holiness does not consist in albs, tonsures, long gowns, and other of their ceremonies devised by them beyond Holy Scripture, but in the Word of God and true faith." (Smalcald Articles, Part III, Art. XII: Of the Church; *Trigl.*, p. 499.)

We wonder just what "the Church" is to Pastor Herbert Lindemann and others more directly responsible for *Portals of Prayer*.

We also wonder just what "liturgical churches" are to these people. Certainly, ours is a liturgical church in the best sense of the word, and we do not have any such intention as Pastor Lindemann speaks of, nor are we going to be counted out from among liturgical churches by Pastor Lindemann or anyone else.

Like our Reformation Fathers, we just are not going to listen to those things which, a confessionally effete Missouri Synod officialdom is permitting sectarian enthusiasts in our midst to enjoin or forbid. And we think also that we have the Spirit of God! (I Cor. 7, 40.)

P. H. B.

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④ A "Roman Catholic" Catechism Published by a Missouri Synod Congregation

In the previous issue we referred to *Lively Stones*. This book is a "Preparation for the First Communion" published by The Lutheran Church of Our Saviour (Missouri Synod) in New York and copyrighted in 1951 by its pastor, the Rev. Berthold von Schenk.

The purpose of this instruction is to prepare Catechumens for their "function (work) as royal priests." (P. 1.) The instruction itself is found on pages 1-63 and on pages 64-73 there is an "Examination of Catechumen before Assembled Congregation."

"You Have a Job Every Sunday"

In explaining I Pet. 2:1-9 it is said: "There are quite a few church members in every parish who think they can go to Communion whenever they please. These people are meant in the 7th and 8th verses (of I Pet. 2). They are disobedient to the Word, to the direct command of Jesus, 'Do this' and 'follow me.' In the Eucharist we follow our Lord. . . . Every Sunday we relive a step in the life of our Lord. . . . There cannot be true discipleship without the Communion. You have a job every Sunday. You must be present and do the Liturgy with your fellow priests. You are not only to assist at the Eucharist. You are a priest and you have a very definite part in the Liturgy." (P. 3.)

This is a wholly legalistic and un-evangelical conception of Sunday.

Doing the Liturgy (the Eucharist) — The Important Thing

"The important thing is not what we get out of going to church, but what we do — the offering of the Spiritual Sacrifice acceptable to God by Jesus Christ. Of course, you can get much, and you can get very little out of a church service. But this is not of primary importance. The important thing is that every Christian has a job to do on Sunday morning. This *DOING* is the Liturgy (The Eucharist)." (P. 50.)

Note that the "important thing" in a church service is not what we get out of it — not even that we get out of it the assurance of personal forgiveness — but that we DO a certain "job." Could the work-righteousness of Roman Catholicism be expressed in clearer words?

Again we read: "What is the primary function of the Royal Priest? Answer: His presence and participation in the Holy Communion when the assembled saints are the Church." (P. 64.) "Why is he called a 'Priest?' Answer: Because he has direct access to God; because he serves at the Altar in the Eucharist; because he offers a sacrifice. What is the Holy Communion? Answer: The Holy Communion is the functioning, the 'doing,' of the friends of Jesus as He commanded them. Here the Royal Priesthood meets in the

Presence of their Living Lord to retrace the steps of their Redemption, to relive the Life of their Lord." (P. 65.)

This coming together of believers to celebrate the Communion, this doing of the Liturgy, is then regarded as the Church, the Mystical Body of Christ.

The Church, the Mystical Body of Christ

"The Church is the assembly, the meeting of believers. . . . When Christian believers come together to celebrate the Communion this is the Church." (P. 11.) "What do we call the coming together of the royal priests to relive the Life of Christ by doing the Liturgy? Answer: This is called the Assembly, the Church, the Body of Christ." (P. 61.) "The Holy Communion is the Body of Christ functioning. Christ is present at the Altar. He is the Head. We are the members of His body by faith. We become one with Jesus in the Communion. Thus there is a mysterious union—the Mystical Body of Christ." (P. 67.)

This is the Roman Catholic conception of the Church as the Mystical Body of Christ.

Here, even as in Roman Catholicism, the Church is looked upon as a mere *external organization*, embracing all those who do the Liturgy.

Here, even as in Roman Catholicism, it is held that the Church is composed "not only of the saints here on earth, but also the saints who have departed with the sign of faith." (P. 40.) In the Roman Liturgy the latter includes the souls in purgatory.

Here, even as in Roman Catholicism, the attributes of the Church are defined only as one, holy, Catholic, and Apostolic; and when a parish church shows these "signs" then such a congregation, even "St. Mary's Church," is rightly called "the Church." (P. 40, 68.)

When believers thus do the Liturgy and thus relive the Life of their Lord, Calvary continues in the Communion, for Calvary and the Communion are the same thing.

Calvary Continues in the Communion

In doing the Liturgy "we do not merely remember, as facts of history, these great events in the Life of our Lord; but since Jesus is present as Head of His Church, the element of time is eliminated, and we are there on Calvary's hill, as the Negro spiritual has it. How do we express this thought? Answer: We call this the 'Real Presence.'" (P. 65.)

"Holy Communion is the same sacrifice which Jesus brought upon the Cross." (P. 69.)

"At the Holy Communion we show forth the death of our Lord when we eat and drink. Calvary, therefore, continues whenever the royal priesthood comes together for the Communion." (P. 20.)

"Are we repeating the sacrifice at the Holy Communion? Answer: No, it is the same sacrifice which continues until Jesus will come again." (P. 70.) "At the Holy Communion we do not repeat the sacrifice on Calvary. Calvary and the Communion are the SAME THING." (P. 31.)

This is also a thoroughly Roman Catholic idea.

Ascension of Jesus

After Jesus had suffered and died on the cross, He descended into hell, ["By 'Hell' we mean the valley of the dead. The saints wait for their Resurrection. . . . Our Lord announced to these spirits (in the valley of the dead—'Hell') that they were now redeemed." P. 17.] and then ascended into heaven.

"Jesus ascended into heaven so that He could be present in a special manner whenever and wherever His disciples celebrated the Holy Communion." (P. 24.)

That is also why He instituted Holy Communion. "Why did Jesus institute the Holy Communion? Answer: So that He could continue His bodily Presence until He will come again in His glory, with His holy angels, to judge the earth." (P. 67.)

Present "On the Altar"

"As God, Jesus is present everywhere. God is everywhere — Jesus, the Son of God, very God of very God, is present everywhere. . . . The Real Presence of Jesus is not just spiritual. He is actually present as the Son of God and the Son of Man. He is present as He was present when He appeared to the disciples behind closed doors on the first Easter night. He is present in His Resurrection Body. I Cor. 15. The Presence, the Real Presence of Jesus is the same kind of a Presence which we will have when Jesus will come for His Second Advent, to judge the world." (P. 24.)

"There He (Jesus) is — on the Altar." (P. 9.) "Where is Christ present? Answer: In the bread and wine on the Altar." (P. 61.)

This is consubstantiation or implies transubstantiation — both of which are rightly rejected by the Lutheran Church.

"Communion is the Continuation of the Temple Service"

"Jesus also ascended into heaven in order to prepare a place for us and to intercede

for us." (P. 67.) That "He prepares a place for us, means that He is preparing us. This is the work of the Church under the Holy Ghost." (P. 24.) Jesus also "intercedes for us in the Holy Communion. His work of Redemption is a continual intercession. At the Communion we 'show forth' this Redemption. Thus the Communion is a very special intercession." (P. 25.)

However, "in order to understand how Jesus intercedes for us at the Holy Communion, we must understand what the Temple worship was in the Old Testament, for the Holy Communion is the continuation of the Temple Service." (P. 29.)

This is bringing the Old Testament priesthood into the New Testament Church and that is the basic Roman Catholic conception of the New Testament ministry.

"The Holy Ministry"

"There are different classifications of the royal priesthood which gathers for the Liturgy, the Church. There are pastors and lay-priests. All are priests, all must be priests." (P. 44.)

"The minister is also a royal priest. This is his highest office. But God in His great wisdom also ordained that there should be special officers at the Eucharist." (P. 50.)

"What is the special ministry of the bishops and presbyters (pastors) in the Eucharist? Answer: They open the Liturgy in the Name of the Triune God; they absolve us of our sins; they instruct us (the Lessons and the sermon); they pray the great Prayer of Consecration; and they pronounce God's Benediction. The pastors serve as chairmen at the assemblies of the saints." (P. 71.)

And finally, as celebrants of the Eucharist they "represent the Risen King Jesus at the Eucharist." (P. 61.)

The last idea is also part and parcel of Roman Catholic theology.

"Laypriest Has the Most to Do"

"The laypriest has the most to do in the Liturgy. 1) He must be present. It is just as important for him to be present as it is for the bishop and presbyter or deacon. 2) He must take part in the service intelligently. To do this he must know the service and the reason for the service. He must also know his Bible and the teachings of the Catholic faith. 3) He should also prepare himself for the Liturgy on the day before by reading all the propers. 4) He is to bring his offering. This is a very important part of the Liturgy.

The offering consists in the bread and wine and in money which is placed upon the altar. This offering must be a symbol of self. When the offering is placed upon the altar, we are on the altar, giving ourselves to God as Jesus gave Himself." (P. 44.) "5) He should receive the true body and blood of our Lord. 6) Now the Liturgy is not finished after the celebrant (pastor) has spoken the blessing in the Name of God. (Of course you know that the celebrant represents Christ in the Liturgy.) The royal priests must live their Liturgy in the home, in school, in business. The royal priest is to bear witness. Talk about Jesus." (P. 45.)

"The Offering —

Important Job of the Lay Priest"

"Since the offering is a symbol of myself, I must bring the proper kind of an offering. St. Paul tells us how much we should give in I Corinthians 16:2. 'To give as God has prospered' — St. Paul meant the Tithe. . . . When the usher takes up our offering (this offering ought to be at least the tithe) it is a symbol of myself. I am really on that offering plate. Now think on: That offering plate is placed on the altar. What else is on the altar? The bread and wine. Now the bread and the wine and the offering of money (myself) is offered to God. My offering is then in pretty good company." (P. 46.)

Since the Sacrifice of Christ on Calvary is continued in the Communion, and since Christ is present in the bread and wine on the altar and offered together with the offering of money (ourselves) to God, therefore we are identified with the great sacrifice of Christ on the cross through our offering.

Identified With the Sacrifice of Christ

"At the sacrifice of the Eucharist our offering is on the Altar with the bread and wine. The offering is a symbol of ourselves. Therefore, we are identified through our offering with the Great Sacrifice of our Lord Jesus Christ on Mount Calvary." (P. 62.) "Our offering is to be a symbol of ourselves. When our offering is placed upon the altar, we who have brought this offering are on the altar. . . . Our offering with the bread and wine, the communion of the Body and the Blood of Jesus Christ, are on the altar. Therefore we are on the altar. Thus we identify ourselves, through our offering with the Great Sacrifice of Jesus upon the Cross on Mount Calvary." (P. 72.)

The "high point of the lay priest's Liturgy" is of course "when he receives the true Body

and Blood of his Lord Jesus Christ." (P. 62.) In the Old Testament "eating a part of the sacrifice meant that he who offered the sacrifice was a part of God, that he belonged to God." (P. 27.)

Thus "when we do as Jesus instructed us — when we show forth His Sacrifice through the Eucharist with our prayers of praise and thanksgiving — then we are 'offering up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ.'" (P. 70.)

The Outline is About the Same

The lay priest is to do the Liturgy every Sunday. But if he will go to different churches he will find that "the Order of Service may be somewhat different, but the outline of the service is about the same. Some churches have more ceremonies while others have less. This also applies to the Roman Catholic, the Episcopal (Anglican) and the Lutheran services, but basically these Christian societies have the same outline of the service. You may also note that the service is called by different names, such as The Service of the Holy Communion, The Mass, The Lord's Supper, The Liturgy and The Eucharist." (P. 52. The next page then gives an outline of the Lutheran, the Episcopal, and the Roman Liturgy.)

What is the only logical conclusion that can be drawn from all this? It can only be this: "The great concurrence binding Eastern, Roman, Lutheran, and Anglican Christianity together is the Real Presence of the Body and Blood of Christ in the Elements upon the Altar. . . . Those who unite in the Holy Sacrament, believe and accept it as Christ has given it, will eventually find community on other basic dogmas." (*Una Sancta*, Holy Name, 1949, p. 9f. On page 25 it is stated that the author "gratefully acknowledges indebtedness to the Rev. B. von Schenk's book, 'The Presence.'")

This is the real object of the Una Sancta or Modern Liturgical Movement, which would unite all Christendom through worship at the Altar.

We have completed our study of the doctrine of the Lord's Supper as it is taught in *Lively Stones* and would summarize our conclusions as follows.

Changing the Nature of the Lord's Supper

The doctrine of the Lord's Supper as taught in *Lively Stones* changes the whole nature of the Lord's Supper from that of a "Sacrament" to that of a "Sacrifice." [Accord-

ing to the Apology "A Sacrament is a ceremony or work in which God presents to us that which the promise annexed to the ceremony offers. A sacrifice, on the contrary, is a ceremony or work which we render God in order to afford Him honor." (*Triglotta*, p. 389.)

In this whole instruction book there is not a single word about the Lord's Supper being, as the Apology has it, "a seal and testimony of the free remission of sins." (*Triglotta*, p. 401.) "The Eucharist is a sacrifice." (P. 3.) "The *important thing* is that we as *royal priests* are *doing this* (meeting in Christ's presence). Every Sunday you and I have a job to do. Our Lord expects us to do this job so that all Jesus was and all that He did may be continued." (P. 48.)

Forgiveness of Sins

It is true, this instruction book does say in explanation of the fifth petition of the Lord's Prayer, "We know that our sins are forgiven by grace, on the merit of Christ, through faith alone." (P. 57.) And yet it says, "To believe means to *know* about the Savior; to *accept* Him as the Savior; to put your complete *trust* in Him as the Savior; to *obey* Him and His Word; to *surrender* to Him in everything." (P. 5.) Again it says, "To believe means to know, accept, trust, obey and surrender to Jesus, my personal Savior and Redeemer." (P. 61.)

But throughout the 73 pages of this instruction book very, very little is said about the forgiveness of sin. This is about all that is said:

"Baptism cleansed me from the sin which I inherited." [P. 64; cf. P. 1: "Now" (when you were baptized) "the sin which you inherited from Adam (original sin) was forgiven."] But what of sins committed after Baptism?

"God forgives the sinner, but not the sin." (P. 27.) And how do we receive such forgiveness? By "making a private confession" and by receiving "private absolution." (P. 54.) "A Christian ought to go to private confession and receive private absolution about once a month." (P. 56.) To this we may add that according to this book the pastor *does not impose* a "penance" as a satisfaction for sin, as that is done in Roman Catholicism.

This "Preparation for the First Communion" of course does not contain the whole abomination of Roman Catholic doctrine. But there is hardly a thought expressed in this

book which could not be conscientiously subscribed to by any Roman Catholic priest.

And this thoroughly Roman Catholic and thoroughly un-Lutheran Catechism has been published by a Missouri Synod congregation and copyrighted by a Missouri Synod pastor.
D.

Postscript

In *Una Sancta*, Epiphany, 1958, p. 22f, B. v. S. (Berthold von Schenk) under the sub-head "Our Readers Ask . . ." answers the question, "What would you do if you wished to establish a truly catholic parish in the Lutheran Church of today?" as follows:

"... I would teach my catechumens, not by using the catechism starting with the Ten Commandments, but I would begin with Baptism and train them in their function as royal priests in the Liturgy. I would teach my people to have an understanding of the Church as the Body of Christ, and that they can only truly function as priests in the Eucharist. I would teach them to realize what it means to confess, 'I believe in the Communion of Saints.' I would teach them the theology of the Divine Liturgy. I would tell them that the Holy Spirit has made me the steward of the mysteries of God, and that I must celebrate the Eucharist at every morning service, or resign my office. I would teach the meaning of the Offering through an understanding of their Liturgy, and that there can only really be an Offering at the Eucharist, for here we identify ourselves with the showing forth of the death of Christ. I would lay great stress on evangelism and the continued priestly office, 'showing forth the virtues of Him' of whom we have learned in the Liturgy. (I Pet. 2:9.) In my adult classes for church membership I would limit myself to the study of the Liturgy, for every Christian dogma is contained in the Liturgy. At the same time, I would teach these new members how to worship . . ."

Here we have the same un-Scriptural teaching as found in Pastor von Schenk's "Preparation for the First Communion."

[And the same false teaching by Pastor von Schenk is found in the March, 1958, *Seminarian*, Student Journal of Theological Opinion and Discussion, Concordia Theological Seminary, St. Louis, Mo.]

Remember this was published only a few months ago. About *six months* after the Northern Illinois District convention stated, "WHEREAS it is apparent from these communications" ("by the officials of our District

with Dr. Herman Rippe, President of the Atlantic District") "that Dr. J. W. Behnken, President of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, Dr. Rippe, as well as other officials and pastors of the Atlantic District, have exercised doctrinal discipline in regard to errors pertaining to the Sacrament of the Altar as present in the Reverend Berthold von Schenk's book, *The Presence*, and have received detailed explanations; . . . THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that we express our gratification that doctrinal discipline has been exercised by Dr. Behnken and the Atlantic District officials; . . ." (*Edifying the Church*, Proceedings of the N. Ill. Dist., 1957, p. 85.)

Didn't the doctrinal "discipline" exercised by Dr. Behnken and the Atlantic officials "take"?

Here is still another instance of public departure from the teaching of God's Word.

In 1955 Trinity Lutheran Congregation of Crete, Ill., informed the Northern Illinois District: "By continuing to support Synod under present circumstances, we would not be faithful to the admonition of the Lord who through His apostle says, 'We can do nothing against the truth, but for the truth,' II Cor. 13:8." (*Preaching the Word*, Proceedings of the N. Ill. Dist., 1955, pp. 84-92.) In 1957 the Northern Illinois District convention presumed to sit in judgment on the action of their fellow-believers in Crete and in a most unevangelical manner resolved "that we fraternally admonish Trinity Congregation, Crete, Illinois, to resume its obligation as a member of the Synod by remitting its fair share of financial support to the District and the Synod." (Cf. *Conf. Luth.*, 1957, Oct., pp. 97-101.)

Whom shall the church "fraternally admonish" — a member who continues to break down the Gospel truth, or a congregation that is concerned to "do nothing against the truth"?

D.

**PASS YOUR COPY OF THE
CONFESSIONAL LUTHERAN
ON TO SOME FRIEND**

❶ **A Creeping Plague**

An active layman in New York, president of his congregation and zone president of the Lutheran Laymen's League, has written us:

"Our people are interested in the High Church Movement, for in the East it is becoming a creeping plague. Most of our lay people still do not know how to speak out and to witness against the dangers of such a movement when it comes to their congregations."

The Missouri Synod has in its Constitution (Art. III: Objects) guaranteed its congregations protection in their rights, the conservation and promotion of the true faith (Eph. 4, 3-6; I Cor. 1, 10), and a united defense against schism and sectarianism (Rom. 1, 17). How come then that anything as schismatic and sectarian as the Romanism that is known under the name of the High Church Movement can become a creeping plague in our church? Does the synod's Constitution still mean anything? If so, just what does it mean in this particular respect?

P. H. B.

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❷ **Scriptural Doctrine of Confessional Church Fellowship
Rejected in LUTHERAN WITNESS**

Under the heading "Lo Here! Lo There!" the Scriptural and historic Lutheran (and Missourian) doctrine of Confessional Church Fellowship has been rejected in the *Lutheran Witness* of March 11 (p. 19).

The public rejection and repudiation of this doctrine as it appeared in the synodical publication reads in its entirety as follows:

"In Luke 17:20, 21 Christ says: 'The kingdom of God cometh not with observation; neither shall they say, Lo here! or, lo there! for, behold, the kingdom of God is within you.'

"Not only does Christ therein disavow a visible church of His on earth, but He also commands men not so to say or claim. With emphasis He proclaims that His church is within the individual; hence, unless we have the 'kingdom of God' within us, we have no part in it, for Rom. 8:9 states: 'Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His.'

"Luther, in Art. VII of the Augsburg Confession, writes: 'And it (the Creed) says

Church Catholic (Universal) in order that we may not understand the church to be an outward government, but men scattered throughout the world who agree concerning the Gospel, and have the same Christ, and the same Holy Ghost, and the same Sacraments, whether they have the same or different human traditions.'

"In view of these authoritative and accepted teachings, how can our church justify its subscribing to and practicing such a dogma as 'Synodical Conference altars for Synodical Conference Lutherans only'? Does not this dogma loudly proclaim the 'Lo here! or, lo there!' forbidden by Christ? Does it not, as a norm of worthiness, substitute church membership for repentance and faith in Christ's merit? And does it not support the Roman Church's claim to a 'True Visible Church of Christ on earth,' the denial of which was the very essence of the Reformation?

"Such a dogma can be predicated only upon a premise of 'Automatic Worthiness by Association,' another Roman Catholic teaching. Infallible?"

Luke 17, 20-21 of course speaks of the Church in the proper sense of the word, — the great invisible congregation or communion of saints throughout the ages. Thank God that we can know by faith that we are in fellowship with that Church even though we cannot identify its members! Thank God there are members of it even in the Roman Catholic Church as well as in every other Christian sect. Thank God that we are not asked to base our confessional fellowship (altar fellowship, pulpit fellowship, prayer fellowship, and fellowship in church work) on recognition of the members of that Church (which would be asking the impossible), which is the Church of which Art. VII of the Augsburg Confession alone speaks, as shown in the corresponding article of its Apology.

"Synodical Conference altars for Synodical Conference Lutherans only" is by no means to be understood as claiming that we are the Church. Rather, from the Church itself, the Church in the proper or strict sense of the word there must be distinguished *its outward fellowship*, which may also be referred to as the "Church" in a wider or larger, improper sense of the word, — in which sense the word "Church" is frequently used in the Holy Scriptures. As for "authoritative and accepted teachings" of the Lutheran Church (though not necessarily of all "Lutheran" churches or "Lutherans") concerning this matter, we refer to Art. VIII of the

Augsburg Confession and to the authoritative commentary on it in the Apology, which rings clear as a bell. Using the word "church" in this wider sense, we can and do speak of a "True Visible Church of Christ on earth," — a Church true to Christ's Word, Mt. 28, 18-20, which in faithfulness to that Word marks and avoids those who cause division contrary to the *doctrine* which we have learned, Rom. 16, 17. However, far from supporting the Roman Church's claim to a true visible church, the denial of which was the essence of the Reformation, we rather reject the papacy, precisely because of such false claims, as the kingdom of the Antichrist, and the pope himself as the very Antichrist in person. Citing "authoritative and accepted teachings" of the Lutheran Church again: "It is a hard thing to be willing to separate oneself from so many lands and people and to teach a separate doctrine (and to be called schismatics). But here stands God's command, that everyone should take heed and not make common cause with those who teach false doctrine or are bent on ruthlessly maintaining it." (Smalcald Articles, Conc. Trigl., p. 516:42.) "We believe, teach, and confess also that no church should condemn another because one has less or more external ceremonies not commanded by God than the other if otherwise there is agreement among them in doctrine and in all its articles, as also in the right use of the holy Sacraments." (Formula of Concord, Art. X.) If all of this authoritative and accepted teaching should not yet be enough, the reader may still take a look at the Concluding Statement of the Formula of Concord concerning the Requirements of Confessional Fellowship among Lutherans which appears on the masthead of the *Confessional Lutheran*.

The article in the *Lutheran Witness* seems to show a rather poor acquaintance with the Confessions of the Lutheran Church. The quotation it cites is not from Art. VII of the Augsburg Confession, but from its Apology. And Luther wrote neither one nor the other; Melancthon did. Nor is the quotation accurate, though nothing essential is missing. All of this, of course, is very negligible.

What is far more significant is the fact that the *Lutheran Witness* is open to both Pro and Con on doctrinal matters today, and as would appear from this testimony, — mostly to Con when it comes to the important controversy on Church Fellowship that is raging among us today.

We still want to refer to Missouri's *A Short Explanation of Luther's Small Cate-*

chism, pp. 131-137, where the doctrine of the Church which is rejected in the *Lutheran Witness* is set forth in considerable detail. There one will find this doctrine as it still ought to be taught in the *Lutheran Witness* as over against the doctrine which is actually being taught there. Compare also the Brief Statement of the Doctrinal Position of the Missouri Synod, Sect. 29: "The orthodox character of a church is established not by its mere name nor by its outward acceptance of, and subscription to, an orthodox creed, but by the doctrine which is *actually* taught in its pulpits, in its theological seminaries, and in its publications." Where is the doctrinal discipline in the Missouri Synod today by which such errors as that under discussion can be combated and eventually removed?

P. H. B.

❶ Did Job Proclaim the Resurrection (19:26ff)?

The Pure Doctrine, Faith, and Confession of the Lutheran Church

"We affirm that no one but God can separate from one another the nature and this corruption of the nature, which will fully come to pass through death, in the blessed resurrection, where our nature which we now bear will rise and live eternally without original sin and separated and sundered from it, as it is written Job 19, 26: *I shall be compassed again with this my skin, and in my flesh shall I see God, whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold.*"

(Formula of Concord, Epitome, I:10; *Trigl.*, p. 781.)

The New Teaching within the Missouri Synod

"The Job passage (19, 26ff) in all probability does not refer to resurrection or even immortality since it appeals to a vindicator other than God to protect Job against God; and thus he is so certain that such a vindicator will come, even though he is stripped and stands in skinless flesh!"

(Professor Gilbert Thiele, Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, Mo., in an essay, "Resurrection of the Body or Immortality of the Soul?," read to pastors of two districts of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod; published in summary in the *Seminarian*, March, 1958, pp. 15-21.)

"The 'Immortality of the Soul' is a sound, Biblical doctrine. True, 110; false, 33; undecided, 4." Campus Opinion Poll of 148

seminarians, a group from each class. *Seminarian*, March, 1958, p. 58f.

❷ What Our Readers Say

"The enclosed check is for a Contributing Membership for the undersigned. I must say that I have changed my mind about the *Confessional Lutheran*. Originally I felt that the writing appeared too vituperative and, at times, seemed in violation of the 8th Commandment.

"Nevertheless, in the last two years or so that I have been reading it, I have become convinced that it is the only publication I know where we can learn the *FACTS* of what is going on in our Church, the *why* and *wherefore* we seem to have lost our moorings and seem to be drifting more and more into the twilight of a pietistic, methodistic Lutheranism which becomes more social-minded and less concerned about the Word of God.

"Some time ago I researched a pamphlet published by Concordia on the subject of race. I was amazed to find that eight of the (ten in all) references were atheists and communist-fronters or outright Communists! I have learned that 'vigilance' is also the price of Christian liberty and orthodoxy!

"Therefore I am happy to renew my subscription and become a contributing member at the same time. By God's grace the *Confessional Lutheran* may become a stronger voice for the strengthening of sound Lutheranism!

"You may appreciate my remarks above when I say that I left the Roman Catholic Church when I was nineteen, years ago, because I felt the power of a Church that relied solely on the Scriptures. Today I possibly would hesitate if I were to judge the Lutheran Church by some of the things stated by Lutheran clergy."

— A Metropolitan Pastor.

❸ The Chicago Study Club

The Chicago Study Club will meet on Wednesday and Thursday, May 28 and 29, beginning at 9:30 A.M. on the former day, in Trinity Lutheran Church, Ridgeland and Erie, Oak Park, Ill. (The Rev. H. W. Romoser, Pastor.) The program of the meeting is as follows: 1) Proposals for Action on the A.C.D.P. Report. 2) Suggested Joint Memorial to the 1959 Convention. 3) Lutheran Boys and Girls Clubs. 4) Action on Doctrinal Resolutions Declared Adopted by Majority Vote. Rev. F. E. Bartling, Corr. Sec'y.

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MOTTO: *Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you: but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment.* — 1 Cor. 1, 10.

"We have no intention of yielding ought of the eternal, immutable truth of God for the sake of temporal peace, tranquillity, and unity (which, moreover, is not in our power to do). Nor would such peace and unity, since it is devised against the truth and for its suppression, have any permanency.. Still less are we inclined to adorn and conceal a corruption of the pure doctrine and manifest, condemned errors. But we entertain heartfelt pleasure and love for, and are on our part sincerely inclined and anxious to advance, that unity according to our utmost power, by which His glory remains to God uninjured, nothing of the divine truth of the Holy Gospel is surrendered, no room is given to the least error, poor sinners are brought to true, genuine repentance, raised up by faith, confirmed in new obedience, and thus justified and eternally saved alone through the sole merit of Christ." — Concluding Statement of the Formula of Concord concerning the Requirements of Confessional Fellowship among Lutherans of the Augsburg Confession. Trigl. Conc., p. 1095.

"It has been our purpose . . . that all unlawful, doubtful, suspicious, and condemned doctrines, wherever and in whatever books they may be found, and whoever may have written them, or even now may be disposed to defend them, might be exposed, distinctly repudiated, so that every one may be faithfully warned against the errors, which are spread here and there in the writings of some theologians, and no one be misled in this matter by the reputation (authority) of any man." — Formula of Concord (Thorough Declaration), Comprehensive Summary; Trigl. Conc., P. 857.

"These highly important matters (the business of religion) concern also the common people and laymen (as they are called), who, inasmuch as they are Christians, must for their salvation distinguish between pure and false doctrine." — Formula of Concord (Thorough Declaration), Comprehensive Summary; Trigl. Conc., P. 853.

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IN THIS ISSUE: The Church's Mission and Bureaucracy — An Open Letter to Dr. Behnken — And Now it is the Ordination of Women to the Pastoral Office — Burying the Dead in Florida — Unbelief in the World Council of Churches — Let Them Study Luther's Small Catechism in St. Louis! — On the Union Front — Review of Publications — What Our Readers Say

❁ **The Church's Mission
and Bureaucracy**

In the *Synod's News Bulletin*, published by the Synodical Affairs Committee of the Missouri Synod, Vol. I, No. 5 (March 1, 1958), we read:

"DISAPPOINTING is the report that we have a fine opportunity to begin work in the Dutch half of New Guinea, but with cut-backs in budget requests for 1958, we may have to let this one go by."

Why is it, whenever officials of the Missouri Synod do not receive all of the money they ask for, the first thing we hear of is the possibility of the curtailment of our mission work? Why not cut out some of our unnecessary bureaus, and unnecessary expenditures of others, instead?

And by the way, it is a vital part of our mission, wherever it may be carried on, at home or abroad, that we teach those whom we gain as disciples and recognize as brethren in the faith to observe all that the Lord of

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"As soon as we look more to our synod than to the
invisible kingdom of God, the kingdom of grace and salva-
tion, we begin to be a sect. For this is really the essence
of sectarianism that one has his eye on his little fellowship
above all, even though the kingdom of God may suffer
harm thereby." "That preacher is no true preacher who
merely seeks to fanaticize his congregation for the Lutheran
Church, or for the Missouri Synod, or, worse still, only for
the Iowa District. Such men are bad preachers. They must
rather direct people to Christ and say: See, we preach the
pure Word of God, in which the everlasting Gospel of
Christ is continued; that is why you should adhere to us,
and therefore we say, Leave us as soon as we no longer do
this! For salvation by no means depends on us, nor also on
the Missouri Synod. So if it no longer preaches the pure
Word of God, then it is worthy of nothing but that one
forsake it." — Dr. C. F. W. Walther, "Concerning the Chief
Obligations Which a Synod Has if it Rightly Wants to Bear
the Name of an Evangelical Lutheran Synod." Doctrinal Essay
at the First Convention of the Iowa District of the Lutheran
Church—Missouri Synod, 1879; Proceedings, pp. 112-114.

the Church has commanded us. Purity of
doctrine lies at the very heart of the Church's
mission and of Christian Stewardship. (Mt.
28, 18-20; I Pet. 4, 10-11.) We cannot get
away from this fact without becoming just
another Christian sect.

P. H. B.

● An Open Letter to Dr. Behnken

We are herewith publishing an Open
Letter to Dr. Behnken. Appended to this
are two further letters bearing on the matter
at issue. Concerning the second one of these,
its author in sending us a copy wrote: "You
may feel free to use any of the material re-
ferred to in the letter, as I have documenta-
tion for it." We did not therefore hesitate
to reveal the name of the writer, who lives
in Detroit. The purpose in publishing both
of these letters is to illustrate the fact that
there are folks in our church who differ with
Dr. Behnken and how they resent his misuse
of our official publication for the dissemina-
tion of his own particular personal views on
political, economic, and social matters.

Is the Social "Gospel" knocking at our
synodical door? Has it already gained
entrance? These and other questions go
through our mind as we emphasize once again
that the only safe and sane policy in the
Church is to resist error in its beginnings.

P. H. B.

April 26, 1958

The Rev. J. W. Behnken, D.D.
President, the Lutheran Church—
Missouri Synod
6477 Murdoch
St. Louis 9, Mo.
Dear Doctor Behnken,

It is hard to tell you how greatly I
deplored seeing in your article "Waging
Peace, Not War," in the *Lutheran Witness*
of March 25, statements like "There is no
doubt that our economic-aid program is a
'must,'" and "Besides economic aid, which
all speakers ranked first in importance there
must be military aid."

It was your privilege to attend the Con-
ference on Foreign Aspects of United States
National Security, held in Washington D. C.,
February 25. You are entitled to your
opinions, expressed in the above statements.
But it is certainly not your privilege, nor
your right, to propagandize your personal
political, economic, and social opinions
through the *Lutheran Witness* as President
of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod.

Our Church's official publication is not an open forum for political, economic, and social questions. Much less is it a closed forum on such matters, where you have the privilege of expressing your personal opinions, while such expression is denied to those of opposite opinion. Whether or not there may be those of opposite opinion, how many there may be on each side of the question, and whose is probably the better opinion, — all of this is irrelevant to the issue at hand. Let's leave the proclamation of a social "gospel" to such church-politicos and worn-out sects as are known for their substitution of it for the soul-saving Gospel of Jesus Christ for which they have little use, some of whom were prominent in the gathering which you attended, like Dr. Edwin T. Dahlberg.

It is a very simple and fundamental matter of principle that is at stake. Christ has said (John 18, 36): "My kingdom is not of this world." And it is the doctrinal position of the Lutheran Church that "the power of the Church and the civil power must not be confounded. The power of the Church has its own commission, to teach the Gospel and to administer the Sacraments. Let it not break into the office of another." (Augsburg Confession, Art. XXVIII:12-13.) You have clearly misused your position and our synodical publication.

It is the right of our Church to be divided in the matters on which you have spoken, and you ought to be protecting that right instead of yourself abusing it.

There is only one province in which a church, and so also our own church, dare not be divided. This is the province of doctrine. "Mark them which cause divisions and offenses contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them." Strangely enough, it is just within this province that our church has become most sorely divided during your presidency. In the Missouri Synod "the President has the supervision regarding the doctrine." (Constitution, Art. XIB: Duties of the President.) However, during your presidency things are remaining unsaid which ought to be said in the way of rejection of false doctrine in our midst. As a result of such lack of proper doctrinal discipline, amounting to a practical open-question policy in doctrinal matters, our church has become full of doctrinal division. One cannot help recalling Luther's well known words to George Major (St. Louis Edition, XVII, 1180), which, paraphrased to suit the conditions of our synod, would read:

"If you believe what our synod confesses, e.g. in its Brief Statement, then help the erring back on the right track and rebuke wanton spirits." Very little time of your presidency remains in which to do this. Can we still hope that it may be done?

Believe me

Most sincerely yours for a Church faithful to the Word of God and its own Confessions,

Paul H. Burgdorf
422 Main Avenue
Clinton, Iowa

Certainly, the whole of the situation before us more than warrants this letter's being written as an open letter, and I wish to have it so considered.

The Confessional Lutheran:

"Enclosed find my check in the amount of \$10.00 for the following five subscriptions and renewals to the *Confessional Lutheran*. . . .

"I would like to comment on 'Witness Comment' by Dr. Behnken on p. 10 of the March 25th issue of the *Lutheran Witness*. First of all, I believe our Lutheran Church should have nothing to do with a meeting of this kind, in this instance called the Conference on Foreign Aspects of U.S. National Security, and therefore Dr. Behnken should not have attended. This conference was nothing else than a gigantic propaganda scheme for obtaining moral support from the U.S. churches and other organizations for the government's huge foreign aid program (which, through the past years, has only made enemies out of the peoples of the so-called friendly nations). Wasn't it Lenin who said 'We will force the U.S. to spend itself to death' or words to that effect? Our National leaders are deluded and blinded to the real issues at stake, it seems to me. So are the majority of the people of the U.S., church people sometimes more so, it would seem. And how haven't the churches fallen down in the last decade or two. I believe we are living in the times described in the Bible . . . II Tim. 3, 13. It would take several pages to describe the conspiracy behind the effort to destroy our country which the above mentioned conference was called to promote, although perhaps unwittingly. The only reason why I mention anything about this at all at this time is because of my reading of your article 'Ye Are the Salt of the Earth' in the April issue of the *Confessional Lutheran*, and that Dr. Behnken should have applied a 'salting' to

the goings on in Washington instead of going there and writing as he did." — A Layman, Dakota.

Dr. John W. Behnken
6477 Murdoch
St. Louis 9, Missouri
Dear Sir:

I was shocked beyond all words to read in the "Lutheran Witness" (March 25 issue) your report on the Eric Johnston rally for foreign aid. While certainly there can be no quarrel with the statement that we must "work while it is yet day" and with your plea for prayers for peace, the report seems to me to be an unwise bit of propaganda for a government policy that is far from being Christian in character.

In the opinion of many thinking American Christians foreign aid is not Christian in any sense of the word. Your participation and that of other clergymen simply reflects the obsession with foreign aid which seems to afflict many leaders of organized religion in America.

Your report in the *Witness* will influence many persons to favor the continuance of this un-Christian and debilitating mutual security program without realization of what it means to us as a nation. There is considerable evidence that churchmen have ignored or discounted the views of competent missionaries who have reported their concern about the *adverse* effects of the foreign aid program. "Christian missionaries, carrying their message to the hearts of individuals created a 'reservoir' of good will abroad. But our junketeering aid distributors accepting the premises of Marxism have created a reservoir of hate." HUMAN EVENTS, March 10, 1958.

As Christians we all know that the reform of society must begin from within, not without — with the reform of the individual through a change of heart and outlook. (Prov. 23:7 and Matthew 15:7-20.) The Marxist doctrine adopted by the proponents of foreign-aid is that societies are changed from without and that individuals are changed in accordance with the changes in the external environment.

The foreign aid program according to Secretary Dulles' own statement is an "instrument of foreign policy," not a national benevolence on behalf of other peoples of the world. Secondly, the foreign aid program is a mass effort to condition whole societies, the policies of governments, and

the loyalties of peoples by the Administration of "environmental conditioning."

Where are these so-called friendly nations to whom we have indiscriminately given billions of hard earned American tax dollars? England is tottering as a world power and closer to complete soviet socialism than ever before. France may be written off as a power and would certainly go pro-Soviet in any crisis. India has professed over and over her pro-Soviet sympathy despite billions of dollars of foreign aid. Did Mr. Johnston or any of the leaders at the meeting give you any credible explanation of why we gave foreign aid in the following amounts to these Iron Curtain countries from July 1, 1945 - June 30, 1957?

| | GRANTS | LOANS | TOTAL |
|----------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| Albania | 20,444,000 | | 20,444,000 |
| Czechoslovakia | 185,827,000 | 29,583,000 | 215,410,000 |
| East Germany | 17,339,000 | | 17,339,000 |
| Hungary | 16,021,000 | 15,917,000 | 31,938,000 |
| Poland | 364,978,000 | 77,720,000 | 442,698,000 |
| SOVIET RUSSIA | 465,434,000 | 222,495,000 | 687,929,000 |
| Yugoslavia | 780,454,000 | 55,900,000 | 836,354,000 |

These figures were taken from the *Congressional Record*. Can you honestly believe that these amounts of money were given to fight Communism? The money has been given and it has supported and bolstered communistic governments while the blood of patriots of all of these countries has cried out to Christians everywhere to relieve them of the atheistic yoke. One good way to help would be stop sending our money which helps crush them still further.

I am further shocked and surprised that you hold such names before Lutheran Christians as Dean Acheson, Dr. J. R. Killian, Adlai Stevenson, and Edwin T. Dahlberg as responsible leaders. I cannot see how Mr. Dahlberg's sympathies are anti-communist when he has signed the Open Letter to President Roosevelt protesting the deportation of Harry Bridges and was a member of the Citizens Committee to Free Earl Browder. Dean Acheson — who in his own words "refused to turn his back on Alger Hiss" — a known traitor to our country. Dr. J. R. Killian — who has coddled a communist sympathizer at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology when he was president of the institution. Adlai Stevenson — whose backing by the liberal and left wing elements in America leave no doubt as to his political alignment. To say nothing of Harry Truman whose notorious dealings with the Pendergast gang certainly are well known to the people and place him hardly in the category of a "Christian." I do not recall that I have read or heard of any of these

men repudiating any of these connections or becoming fundamental Christians.

Yet I must certainly agree that we live in "critical," "dangerous," and "threatening" days. Did the leaders at the meeting call upon Americans to turn to Christ as Savior for help? I imagine that Rabbi Adams would have found that somewhat difficult.

I am most sorry that your report appeared in the *Witness* and feel that your sanction of this rally whether official or un-official was most unfortunate.

Let us pray that our people will see the light and understand this diabolical threat in our own country as well as abroad. Let us not confuse the continued drainage of American dollars and capital goods with spreading the Gospel of our Lord. They are not the same thing and never will be.

Sincerely,
Betty MacKenzie

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● And Now It Is the Ordination of Women to the Pastoral Office

Endorsed by Pastors and Synodical Officials

In 1953 the Houston convention of the Missouri Synod resolved "that the President of Synod appoint a committee of five members to prepare for the next convention a thorough exegetical study of I Corinthians 14, I Timothy 2, and all other applicable texts as they relate to the question of woman suffrage in our congregations." (Note the word "question!") This committee reported to the St. Paul convention in 1956 and its report is published in the 1956 *Proceedings*, pp. 553-568.

Some time ago we received a letter advertising the book *Woman in the Church* by Russell C. Prohl and citing favorable comments by various pastors and laymen. One pastor wrote: "I am in complete agreement with your conclusions. Wish I could do more to back you up." Another pastor wrote: "I agree fully with your conclusions that there is nothing in Scripture forbidding a woman to 'desire the office of a bishop.'" A College President wrote: "I have tried hard to find weaknesses which I might be able to point out. Fortunately or unfortunately I have not been able to do this. As

you have probably guessed, I have long found myself in agreement with your position." A Synodical Board member wrote: "I have tried desperately to find something wrong with your presentation but it seems to stand on its own."

Picking up the March, 1958, *Advance*, we notice that this synodical publication in reviewing this book said among other things: "He (the author) urges that the church reconsider its stand and recognize that some of the prohibitions of the New Testament are not given for all time and do not apply today; for example, that every woman in the church must have her head covered and be denied the privilege of speaking." But what *Advance* fails to report is that this Missourian publication openly attacks the historical Scriptural position of the Missouri Synod not on woman's suffrage but on woman's ordination to the pastoral office.

"One in Christ Jesus"

Scripture says: "Ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ," Gal. 3:26, 27. Again it says: "For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free," I Cor. 12:13. In other words, by Baptism all believers have put on Christ and have been incorporated in His body, the one holy Christian Church, the congregation of true believers.

God now looks upon such believers as though they were Christ Himself. All external differences as to race or sex or social status cease to exist as far as God is concerned. "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus," Gal. 3:28. The believers are in Christ and with Christ, as it were, *one* person. God no longer looks upon them as individual persons, but He sees only Christ in them. "There is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free: but Christ is all, and in all," Col. 3:11.

But does that mean that all distinctions as to race or sex or social status must be ignored in the Church of Christ? Is the "headship" of man and the "subjection" of woman invalidated by the fact that in Christ among believers there is neither Jew nor Greek, neither bond nor free, neither male nor female? Does that mean that "Redemp-

tion has removed the inequality of the order of creation and transcends it"? By no means. On the contrary, St. Paul lets the external differences stand, but would "sanctify" them in their relation to Christ.

"Sanctified" in Relation to Christ

Regarding the external differences as to race and social status St. Paul expressly enjoins: "As God hath distributed to every man, as the Lord hath called every one, so let him walk. And so ordain I in all churches. Is any man called being circumcised? let him not become uncircumcised. Is any called in uncircumcision? let him not be circumcised. Circumcision is nothing, and uncircumcision is nothing, but the keeping of the commandments of God. Let every man abide in the same calling wherein he was called. Art thou called being a servant? care not for it: but if thou mayest be made free, use it rather. For he that is called in the Lord, being a servant, is the Lord's freeman: likewise also he that is called, being free, is Christ's servant. . . . Brethren, let every man, wherein he is called, therein abide with God." I Cor. 7:17-24. In short, every one may remain in the state in which he was called, be that state of circumcision (Jew) or uncircumcision (Gentile), be that state of slavery or of freeman. Paul therefore lets the external differences as to race and social status stand among the Corinthian Christians.

And concerning the relation of husband and wife Scripture says: "Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord. . . . As the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in every thing. Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ loved the church, and gave himself for it. . . . He that loveth his wife loveth himself. For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the church," Eph. 5:22ff.

Here St. Paul does not cancel or obliterate the difference between man and woman. He permits the "inequality of the order of creation" to stand, but "sanctifies" the difference between husband and wife in their relation to Christ.

The Order of Creation

In regard to the marriage relationship between Christian husbands and wives and their relationship to Christ the Apostle, in admonishing wives to submit themselves

unto their own husbands, says: "For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church," Eph. 5:23.

That man is the head of the woman is according to the order of creation as we learn from I Cor. 11:3: "the head of every man is Christ; and the head of the woman is the man; the head of Christ is God." The President's Committee on Woman's Suffrage has rightly said: "In verse 3 Paul sets up a graded order of 'headship': GOD — CHRIST — MAN — WOMAN, each member of the order *superordinated* to the succeeding member, or reversing the order: WOMAN — MAN — CHRIST — GOD, each member of the order *subordinated* to the succeeding member." [The subordination of Christ to God refers of course to his "mediatorial work."] "Paul finds an essential distinction between the position of man and woman grounded in the will of God as expressed in the creation account, to which he alludes in v. 7b-9." (*Proceedings*, 1956, p. 558.)

The "order of redemption" has therefore not abolished the "order of creation" or removed its "inequality."

A "Closed Service" (?)

But here Pastor Prohl insists: "In I Corinthians 10 and 11 Paul makes reference to the agape and the eucharist, the love feast and the Lord's Supper with which the feast was climaxed. This was a closed service. Only the initiated were invited. At this service, where no outsiders were present, the Christian wife was permitted to join the men in leading in prayer and delivering God's message." (*Woman in the Church*, p. 30.) Again he says: "From I Corinthians 11 we learned that the Christian wife, when she assists in conducting the service at the closed meeting of the church, is to cover her head to indicate that she is a faithful wife." (P. 31.)

That the service referred to in I Cor. 11 was a "closed service" is mere assumption. "There is not a bit of evidence for this assumption in the context. On the contrary, *the whole section from 11:2 to 14:40 pertains to public worship services.*" (*Proceedings*, 1956, p. 559.)

I Cor. 14:34, 35 and I Tim. 2:11, 12

I Cor. 14:34, 35 reads: "(As in all churches of the saints) Let your women keep silence in the churches: for it not permitted unto them to speak; but they are commanded

to be under obedience, as also saith the law. And if they will learn any thing, let them ask their husband at home: for it is a shame for women to speak in the church."

I Tim. 2:11, 12 reads: "Let the woman learn in silence with all subjection. But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence."

These words are so clear that Pastor Prohl is forced to admit: "We cannot agree with those who try to read into these verses the idea that they do not demand a complete silence, or that they just deny the right to debate, or that they do no more than instruct the women not to cause a commotion. Lenski is correct when he declares that the men only and not the women are to speak, teach, prophesy, use tongues, interpret and pray." But Pastor Prohl insists that "these restrictions are placed upon Christian wives" and not on women in general. (P. 32.)

Now it is true, in I Cor. 14 Paul has married women in mind, for he says that if women wish to learn "let them ask their husband at home." But in *The Office of Woman in the Church* by Zerbst-Merkens it is rightly asked: "Are unmarried women, then, permitted to speak? This conclusion is unwarranted. And, Schmiedel, asks, 'should Paul always have been so mindful of the scrupulosity of his expositors,' as to add here the express remark that this same prohibition applies also to unmarried women? Furthermore, Paul here refrains from giving explicit instructions to women whose husbands are pagans." (P. 48.)

"Where are These Restrictions to be in Effect?"

Pastor Prohl answers: "Here (I Cor. 14) we have the mass, the service, of the catechumens, the open service of the church. It is in this service where there are those present who are uninstructed or unbelievers, where there are those who might see in any active participation of a woman a confirmation of the accusations against the church which were so prevalent in those days, that absolute silence is demanded. The I Timothy 2 passage does not mention the church, but from verse eight we can make the deduction that the restrictions are to be observed in every place, where the men only, and not the women, are to raise their hands in prayer. This, again, is the open meeting where greater restrictions were necessary because of the non-Christians present." (P. 34.)

Considering all this it would seem as though Pastor Prohl actually agrees with the historical Scriptural position of the Missouri Synod regarding the ordination of women to the pastoral office. That, however, is far from being the case.

The Apostolic Directives No Longer Binding

Because of the low regard of women found among the Jews and because of the custom of the Greeks and the law of Rome (pp. 48-54), Pastor Prohl contends that St. Paul insisted that Christian wives give the lie "to those who said that the Christian church was destroying marriage and the home. They were to do this by dressing modestly, by retaining the head covering when they were officiating at a closed service, and by maintaining the customary silence in the open services where outsiders were present. Thus they would help to avoid the accusations of sexual profligacy by demonstrating that the Christian wife recognized the headship of her husband in marriage both as a law of God and the law of the land." (P. 59.) "God wants His people in all ages to lead chaste and decent lives in word and deed. But uncovering the head and speaking in promiscuous gatherings, which were considered indecent in 64 A.D., are not considered indecent today. The apostolic directives concerning them are therefore no more to be considered as binding in any way. Martin Dibelius is correct when he contends that the Pauline commands to be silent in the churches are directed only to married women, and that they do not apply to our present situation." (P. 63f.)

"It is time for the Lutheran Church to support the 1955 resolution of the Presbyterians that 'there is no theological ground for denying ordination to women, simply because they are women.'" (P. 80.)

Pastor Prohl concludes with these words: "May God speed the day when . . . the host of women preachers will be great indeed, and when . . . it shall be our privilege also in Lutheran pulpits to hear a woman herald of Good Tidings lifting up her voice to tell the Lord's Zion, 'Behold Your God!'" (P. 80.)

"The Commandments of the Lord"

But the author of *Woman in the Church* completely ignores the fact that in connection with the very command that the women be silent in the churches, St. Paul says,

"What? came the word of God out from you? or came it unto you only?" In other words, Are you questioning my instructions? Are you imagining that the Word of God originated in your church, or that you have a monopoly of God's Truth? "If any man think himself to be a prophet, or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things that I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord. But if any man be ignorant, let him be ignorant," I Cor. 14:36-38. Let him who contends that what the Apostle writes are not the commandments of God be regarded as a false prophet and treated as an ignoramus.

The commandments of God do not accommodate themselves to the customs and laws of men but are the eternal verities of God. As such they are to be observed until the end of days.

The author of *Woman in the Church* follows in the footsteps of those scribes and Pharisees, who dared to make the "commandments of God of none effect" by their own traditions, Matt. 15:6.

This then is the latest attack on Synod's historical doctrinal position in our circles. And this attack, based on crass rationalism and without any foundation in Scripture, has, sorry to say, already been endorsed by pastors and synodical officials. Here we are reaping another fruit of the Presidium's Agreement with the "44." What would happen if, logically, the "44" were to take complete control of synod, one of their number being elected to succeed the President who prepared the way for this? God have mercy!

D.

**PLEASE RENEW YOUR SUBSCRIPTION
TO THE
CONFESSIONAL LUTHERAN
PROMPTLY**

● Burying the Dead in Florida

The Winter Haven Herald of Jan. 31 in a front-page article taking note of the death of Frank Vaughn, pioneer Havenite, contained the following news regarding his funeral.

"Services were held Monday at 10:30 a.m. from the Mitchell Funeral Home Chapel with Dr. A. L. Carnett, Pastor of First Baptist Church, and the Rev. Aug. Bernthal, Pastor of Grace Lutheran Church, officiating."

The Rev. August Bernthal is listed as a pastor of the Missouri Synod in its Annual.

● Unbelief in the World Council of Churches

Bishop G. Bromley Oxnam, president-designate of the Council of Bishops of the Methodist Church has published a book, his seventeenth, in which he has again documented the terrible unbelief for which he stands and which he is freely permitted to promote in the Church. Bishop Oxnam has served as a president of the Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America and of the World Council of Churches. He now serves on the executive committee of the WCC and on the powerful general board of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U. S. A.

The title of Bishop Oxnam's latest book is *A Testament of Faith*. In a review of it in the *Christian Beacon*, Dr. Carl McIntire has rightly said: "It should be called *A Testament of Unbelief*. But it is characteristic of unbelief today to call itself 'faith.' It is part of the deception that is being perpetrated in the twentieth century apostasy."

The chapter titles of this book further reveal the deception which Modernism practices as it mouths the language of the Church and its Creeds, even while it empties these of their true and historic content and fills them with the venom of its unbelief. The titles are: "I Believe in God." "I Believe in Jesus Christ." "I Believe in Life Everlasting." "I Believe in Prayer." "I Believe in the Church." "I Believe in the Forgiveness of Sins." "I Believe in Man." (Could these titles, by the way, serve some people as a document of a Common Confession of Faith with Bishop Oxnam? Why not? What is wrong with them?)

In his book, Bishop Oxnam repeats the "dirty bully" statement he first made already in 1914 before the students of Yale Divinity School in the Lyman Beecher Lectures on Preaching, subsequently published under the title *Preaching in a Revolutionary Age*. Oxnam here relates: "Hugh Walpole, in *Winters-moon*, tells of a father and son at church. The aged rector read from the Old Testament, and the boy learned of the terrible God who sent plagues upon the people and created fiery serpents to assault them. That night, when the father passed the boy's bedroom, the boy called him, put his arms around the father's neck, and, drawing him close, said, 'Father, you hate Jehovah. So do I. I loathe him, dirty bully!' Oxnam himself then goes on to say: 'We have long

since rejected a conception of reconciliation associated historically with an ideal of a Deity that is loathsome. God, for us, cannot be thought of as an angry, awful, avenging Being who because of Adam's sin must have his Shylockian pound of flesh. No wonder the honest boy in justifiable repugnance could say, 'Dirty bully.' (P. 79.)

In the chapter on Jesus Christ, Oxnam shows how very, very deeply he is offended by the preaching of the Cross. He asks: "But must God have a sacrifice, the Lamb slain from the beginning of the foundation of the world, as the Book says?" And this is his answer: "No, no, I cannot think of it this way." Rejecting the Scriptural faith of the saints through the ages, he says: "They insist there must be payment, and argue that God sent His own Son, who died upon the Cross and in so doing satisfied God's sense of legalistic justice. They hold that this sacrifice was sufficient to get the accounts straight, to rule off debits against this great credit, a sufficient payment for all of the past and for all of the days to come. It simply does not make sense to me. It is rather an offense. It offends my moral sense."

Denying God's imputation of Adam's sin to our race, the bishop says: "That a curse is upon man because of the sin of the first man is to me an immoral absurdity. I am not responsible personally for Adam's sin."

What of the Virgin Birth? "The doctrine," he says, "assumes that Jesus was conceived without sin, and this means without a human father. I refuse to believe that there is sin in the form of conception that God Himself has ordained for humanity. The deity of Jesus Christ rests on firmer ground, in my thinking, than upon the idea of virgin birth so prevalent in centuries gone by."

There is much more of this in the bishop's book. But what more could there remain to deny?

And they have been telling us in St. Louis that old Modernism is dead. (It's as old as Gen. 3, 1 and as contemporary as the bishop's book.) Isn't it highest time for a thorough clean-up in St. Louis? But thorough!

P. H. B.

• Let Them Study Luther's Small Catechism in St. Louis!

The Voice of Rome

The *Concordia Theological Monthly*, edited
by the Faculty of Concordia Seminary in St.

Louis, in its May, 1958, issue has an article entitled "The Hymn and the Liturgy" — "Liturgy" being defined in its "most distinct and particular meaning" as "the Christian service of the Eucharist, sometimes known as the Divine Liturgy or the Mass," and "generally" as that worship which is "officially organized by the Church."

Regarding the hymns found in our *Lutheran Hymnal* under the heading "The Lord's Supper," the article says that they are "from a liturgical point of view disappointing. Perhaps this stems from a general neglect and misunderstanding of the blessed Eucharist. Many of these 13 hymns (304-316) are too subjective to be really good liturgical hymns. Some of them only stress subjective aspects of personal Eucharistic piety — worthiness or unworthiness, assurance of personal forgiveness, personal belief in the Real Presence, etc. They put too much stress on the personal benefits and the strengthening of one's faith through the Holy Communion. These, of course, are valid emphases, but their exclusive use creates unbalanced and unliturgical Communion hymns. These emphases must not dominate to the exclusion of other objective and liturgical aspects of the holy Sacrament. Some of these objective facets of the Communion that are neglected are the *recognition of the church as the body of Christ in the Sacrament, the unique participation of the believer in that church as he communes at the altar, the horizontal fellowship among Christians expressed at the altar, the one great sacrifice of Jesus Christ for the church, made real in Communion, wonder at the sacramental mysteries, joy and thanksgiving for the life-giving atonement offered to us in the Eucharist, and others. These emphases, of course, are not totally lacking, but they do seem to take a secondary position. Too many of our Communion hymns are one-sided in their subjective piety.*" (P. 339. Our emphasis.)

This is the language of the Modern Liturgical *Una Sancta* Movement. Rome is here speaking in the pages of the *Concordia Theological Monthly*.

The Lutheran Confessions

In the Augsburg Confession (Article XIII) the Lutheran Church confesses that the Sacraments "were ordained not only that they may be signs whereby one may externally recognize Christians, but they are signs and testimonies of the will of God towards us, to awaken and confirm our faith through them; whence they require faith and are then

properly used, when we accept them in faith and strengthen the faith thereby." (*Triglotta*, p. 48.)

Accordingly, the Apology says that the Sacrament of the Altar was "instituted for the purpose of being a seal and testimony of the free remission of sins." The German says that the Sacrament was instituted "as a seal and sure testimony of the forgiveness of sins, whereby the hearts are reminded and faith is strengthened, so that they firmly believe that sins have been forgiven to them." (*Triglotta*, p. 400.)

The Lutheran Church therefore confesses that the Lord's Supper has been instituted for the sole purpose of strengthening and confirming the individual in his faith that his sins are forgiven to him. It knows of no other purpose of the Lord's Supper, and rightly so, for as the *Brief Statement* says, "the object (Zweck) of the Lord's Supper, that is, of the ministration of the body and blood of Christ, is *none other than* the communication and sealing of the forgiveness of sins, as the words declare: 'Given for you,' and 'Shed for you for the remission of sins,' Luke 22:19, 20; Matt. 26:28." (Par. 21. Our emphasis.)

Luther's Small Catechism

All this is taught already in Luther's Small Catechism. "What is the benefit of such eating and drinking? Answer: That is shown us by these words, 'Given and shed for you for the remission of sins,' namely, that in the Sacrament forgiveness of sins, life and salvation are given us through these words. For where there is forgiveness of sins, there is also life and salvation."

According to our Small Catechism the whole benefit of the Lord's Supper is the forgiveness of sins. But in and with such forgiveness of sins we at the same time receive life and salvation, for both are comprehended and contained in such forgiveness as its necessary fruit and consequence. "Where there is forgiveness of sins, there is also life and salvation."

Life and salvation — in these words the whole life of a true believer in Christ is comprehended. This life in Christ, this communion and fellowship with Christ and with all true believers in Christ in the one holy Christian Church, is found only where there is forgiveness of sins, only where forgiveness of sins is apprehended and appropriated by faith. Where forgiveness of sin is not apprehended and appropriated by faith, there there

is no union with Christ and with the believers in Christ in the mystical body of Christ, no communion and fellowship with believers in the one holy Christian Church.

Our Catechism asks: "How can bodily eating and drinking do such great things?" and answers: "It is not the eating and drinking indeed that does them." Yes, we could eat and drink Christ's body and blood in the Lord's Supper every day of our life and still not have life in Christ, still not be in communion and fellowship with Christ and with all true believers. Then pointing to the words, "Given and shed for you for the remission of sins," our Catechism says that these words "besides the bodily eating and drinking are as the chief thing in the Sacrament, and he that *believe these words* has what they say and express, namely, the forgiveness of sins."

Where there is no assurance of personal forgiveness and no faith in such personal forgiveness, and where there is no strengthening of one's faith in the Lord's Supper, there there is no spiritual life, no life in Christ, no life with true believers, but only death, spiritual and eternal death.

The author of the C. T. M. article speaks of "misunderstanding the blessed Eucharist." If he and those responsible for the publication of his article would but understand Luther's Small Catechism, they would not have written or published those words of theirs.

Therefore we say: Let them study Luther's Small Catechism in St. Louis!

D.

ON THE UNION FRONT

L.W.F. Assembly

It is time that Lutherans who would be true to their Confessional writings take a good look at the overall picture of the Minneapolis assembly of the Lutheran World Federation, and its results. The sessions were held August 15-25, 1957. Aided by the months of intervening time, we are better able to evaluate the assembly, and to ascertain the various directions which events are taking, also with regard to the Lutheran Church — Missouri Synod.

Is the Assembly Worth What it Costs

So asks *The Lutheran*, official organ of the United Lutheran Church. It goes on to

report (July 31, 1957, p. 4-5): "A million dollars will be spent by Lutherans in getting to Minneapolis, staying there ten days, plus expenses of staging the big meeting (official budget, \$531,000). There was one skeptic as to the value of such a meeting.

"Dr. T. O. Burntvedt, president of the small, independent-minded Lutheran Free Church was 'somewhat inclined to question if the expenditure of time, man-power, and material means in planning and paying for these large assemblies is commensurate with their real worth to the kingdom of God on earth.'

"President Franklin Clark Fry of the United Lutheran Church sees the assembly as an investment in world Lutheran unity. 'I hope,' he said, 'that we Lutherans of many nations will find a deeper and broader unity with each other at Minneapolis, and beyond ourselves with evangelical Christians everywhere.'

"The 'test' for Lutherans of America, said Dr. Fry, is, 'Are we as ready to learn as we are to teach? The traffic of ideas will need to go in two directions, in as well as out. The significance of the coming event will depend not only on numbers — the size of immense crowds at dramatic public events — but on the depth of the impression left on each individual, on his ability to absorb the best from Lutherans all over the world.'"

Play-up of Leaders

Various leaders, all of the "ecumenical" mind, were duly played up in the various Lutheran periodicals, before, during, and after the assembly. Bishop Otto Dibelius of Berlin was given a large spread in the *Lutheran Standard*, official organ of the American Lutheran Church (August 10, 1957), in which the N.L.C. News Bureau staff writer states (p. 9): "After the war, when he was named Bishop of the Evangelical Church of Berlin — Brandenburg in 1945, he set out to unite the Protestant churches of Germany. This task was accomplished with the formation of the Evangelical Church in Germany. . . ." The latter organization became known as "EKiD," and was frankly a Lutheran-plus-Reformed organization. The *Standard's* cover picture of the Bishop bears the caption: "Dibelius — Champion of Freedom."

Bishop Hans Lilje, out-going President of the L.W.F., was likewise praised as "God's Stalwart" in the *Lutheran Standard* (Aug. 17, 1957).

Dr. Franklin Clark Fry is praised as "Churchman Extraordinary" in *Lutheran Herald*, official organ of the Evangelical Lutheran Church (Aug. 27, 1957, p. 798-801; also cover), where his activities within the National Council of Churches and the World Council of Churches are lauded. *Lutheran Standard* followed suit (Sept. 7, 1957, p. 8ff). Dr. Fry was elected President of the L.W.F. at Minneapolis.

Dr. Carl E. Lund-Quist, Executive Secretary of the L.W.F., is billed as "Lutheranism's Man of the Hour" in *Lutheran Herald*, Aug. 13, 1957, pp. 749-753. An article in *Lutheran Standard* (Sept. 14, 1957, pp. 18-19) is headed: "From farm boy to church diplomat. Lund-Quist: The World is His Parish."

What Was Looked for

"Bishop Lilje felt this conclave so important in the history of the church that it might produce a statement equal to those of famed church councils, like Nicea or Augsburg." (*The Lutheran*, Aug. 28, 1957, p. 50.)

Dr. J. W. Behnken, President of the Lutheran Church — Missouri Synod, in a statement to the N.L.C. News Bureau, said (in part): "(1) Will the Study Document be brought into full agreement with the Bible and the Lutheran Confessions? (2) Will there be a clear-cut statement that the Bible, the written Word, is in all its parts the inspired Word of God? (3) Will there be an unequivocal statement concerning the distinctively Lutheran doctrine of the Lord's Supper, the doctrine of the Real Presence?"

"If the Assembly comes to grips with these basic issues and presents definite statements based on God's Word and the Lutheran Confessions and, following the example of the Formula of Concord, also rejects the false teaching of the errorists, who by their errors hinder the work of the Holy Spirit toward unity, it will have taken a great step forward and will help to bring about a greater degree of unity among Lutherans in America and throughout the world. . . ." (*The National Lutheran*, Souvenir Edition, 1957, p. 11, and the *Lutheran Layman*, July 1, 1957, p. 3.)

Many other things were looked for, such as the furtherance of the ecumenical movement among Lutherans (e.g., Dr. Fry's statement above), but we shall not now concern ourselves with these at any length.

What Was Accomplished

The Assembly issued a "statement of the faith of the assembled delegates," known as the "51 theses," which, however, were not "adopted" or "accepted." *Lutheran Herald* (Sept. 10, 1957, p. 852) reports: "On Saturday morning these statements were dramatically read by Dr. Fry, the new LWF president, and unanimously 'received' by the representatives. It was carefully pointed out that the theses were neither 'accepted' nor 'adopted' by the assembly, for that might imply a full doctrinal and confessional agreement which does not exist among all LWF churches. They were received by the assembly for study by the churches."

This is as close as the assembly came to presenting "definite statements" "equal to those of famed church councils." The fact is patent that the assembly committed itself to nothing definite.

It would be well if Dr. Behnken would inform the Missouri Synod that his specific points of appeal (cp. his statement above) were not treated by the Assembly, and that his hopes in this respect were not realized. This has not been done up to the present writing. The Assembly *did not* bring its confession into full agreement with the Bible and the Lutheran Confessions. It *did not* make a clear-cut statement concerning the plenary inspiration of the Bible. It *did not* make an equivocal statement concerning the distinctively Lutheran doctrine of the Real Presence of the body and blood of Christ in the Lord's Supper. The "51 theses" were "received" for study, but not "adopted." In addition, they are grossly equivocal on all these matters.

Dr. Fry summed up the situation, to his own satisfaction, after this third Assembly of the Lutheran World Federation, as follows: "At Lund, Lutherans learned to march together; at Hannover, they learned to worship together; at Minneapolis, they learned to think together." (*Lutheran Herald*, Sept. 10, 1957, p. 852.) The marching and the worship are plain to see, but the thinking leaves much to be desired.

Recipe for a World Assembly

Ingredients: Money (the American variety, in seven figures, is hard to beat); personalities (given the proper billing); parades (topped with placards); assorted theological opinions (double portion). Stir the last named ingredient for ten days, during which it will assume a neutral hue, and the con-

sistency of mush. Then fold all the ingredients together lightly. You now have what is perhaps the most tasteless dish you could set teeth into. But never mind. Wrap in the rose-colored cellophane of publicity, and you'd be surprised how easy it is to sell, and how many people will buy it.

Next time: Missouri and the L.W.F.
A. V. K.

● Review of Publications

Woman in the Church by Russell C. Prohl. 86 pages, 5½x9. Eerdmans Publishing House, Grand Rapids, Mich. \$2.00.

The subtitle "A Restudy of Woman's Place in Building the Kingdom" indicates that the author does not agree with the historic Lutheran position. He contends that the "apostolic directives" in I Cor. 14:35,36 and I Tim. 2:11, 12 "are no more to be considered binding in any way" and that the "Pauline commands" do not "apply to our present situation." He concludes with the hope that God may speed the day when there will be a host of women preachers also in Lutheran pulpits.

The author is a Missouri Synod clergyman and was the pastor of Redeemer Lutheran Church at Wichita Falls, Texas, at the time of the publication of the work under review. For its further story see the extended article on another page entitled "And Now it is the Ordination of Women to the Pastoral Office."

● What Our Readers Say

"Because of the inescapable nauseating effect the High Church movement has on me and my family, I have recently been compelled to seek refuge in a conservative ALC congregation. My present pastor . . . is very fiery in his opposition to Roman tendencies and speaks of them as *externals* that wind their way to the *internal* and then jeopardize the *eternal*."

"Some time ago a family of local immigrants from Germany wandered into the vestibule of . . . Lutheran Church . . . of the Missouri Synod. Upon opening the door to the auditorium they spied acolytes and vestments that caused them to think a big mistake had been made by the friends who had told them of the possibility of a German service at . . . They made an abrupt right-about face, and later told their friends they had played a prank on them. They thought they had been in a Roman Church." — Layman, Iowa.

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MOTTO: Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you: but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment." — 1 Cor. 1, 10.

"We have no intention of yielding sight of the eternal, immutable truth of God for the sake of temporal peace, tranquility, and unity (which, moreover, is not in our power to do). Nor would such peace and unity, since it is devised against the truth and for its suppression, have any permanency. Still less are we inclined to adorn and conceal a corruption of the pure doctrine and manifest, condemned errors. But we entertain heartfelt pleasure and love for, and are on our part sincerely inclined and anxious to advance, that unity according to our utmost power, by which His glory remains to God uninjured, nothing of the divine truth of the Holy Gospel is surrendered, no room is given to the least error, poor sinners are brought to true, genuine repentance, raised up by faith, confirmed in new obedience, and thus justified and eternally saved alone through the sole merit of Christ." — Concluding Statement of the Formula of Concord concerning the Requirements of Confessional Fellowship among Lutherans of the Augsburg Confession. Trigl. Conc., p. 1095.

"It has been our purpose . . . that all unlawful, doubtful, suspicious, and condemned doctrines, wherever and in whatever books they may be found, and whoever may have written them, or even now may be disposed to defend them, might be exposed, distinctly repudiated, so that every one may be faithfully warned against the errors, which are spread here and there in the writings of some theologians, and no one be misled in this matter by the reputation (authority) of any man." — Formula of Concord (Thorough Declaration), Comprehensive Summary; Trigl. Conc., P. 857.

"These highly important matters (the business of religion) concern also the common people and laymen (as they are called), who, inasmuch as they are Christians, must for their salvation distinguish between pure and false doctrine." — Formula of Concord (Thorough Declaration), Comprehensive Summary; Trigl. Conc., P. 853.

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IN THIS ISSUE: The Confusion of Tongues in St. Louis — Why Pray for the Souls of the Dead? — Must We "Restudy" Everything? — Some Recent Instances of the Leaven of High-Churchism Within the Missouri Synod — Two Footnotes — The Simple Solution of the Problem Before Us — Armed Forces Prayer — May the Resurrection of All the Dead on the Last Day Now be Openly Questioned or Denied Within Our Circles? — On the Union Front — Just a Poor Joke? — What Our Readers Say — Will Some One Supply This One Copy?

● The Confusion of Tongues in St. Louis

One of our members brought us a copy of *This Day* (May, 1958). She was disturbed by seeing one of our seminary professors in St. Louis teach the following (p. 5): "God's men are going to be doing the same work in heaven that they have been doing on earth. They are going to be judges of God's people;

that means helpers, benefactors. Love won't fail in heaven; this business of sustaining one another in the life of God will not merely not stop, but it will come into full flower." This is taught by Prof. Rich. R. Caemmerer of Concordia Seminary in St. Louis in an article on "Their Works Do Follow Them."

What do the Scriptures have to say of such teaching? "Doubtless Thou art our Father, though Abraham be ignorant of us, and Israel acknowledge us not." (Is. 63, 16.)

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"As soon as we look more to our synod than to the invisible kingdom of God, the kingdom of grace and salvation, we begin to be a sect. For this is really the essence of sectarianism that one has his eye on his little fellowship above all, even though the kingdom of God may suffer harm thereby." "That preacher is no true preacher who merely seeks to fanaticize his congregation for the Lutheran Church, or for the Missouri Synod, or, worse still, only for the Iowa District. Such men are bad preachers. They must rather direct people to Christ and say: See, we preach the pure Word of God, in which the everlasting Gospel of Christ is continued; that is why you should adhere to us, and therefore we say, Leave us as soon as we no longer do this! For salvation by no means depends on us, nor also on the Missouri Synod. So if it no longer preaches the pure Word of God, then it is worthy of nothing but that one forsake it." — Dr. C. F. W. Walther, "Concerning the Chief Obligations Which a Synod Has if it Rightly Wants to Bear the Name of an Evangelical Lutheran Synod." Doctrinal Essay at the First Convention of the Iowa District of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, 1879; Proceedings, pp. 112, 114.

We teach, accordingly, that there is no Scripture warrant for attributing to the souls of the departed a direct knowledge of particular things and happenings on earth. (Pieper-Albrecht, III, 515.)

It is interesting to note that Prof. Gilbert Thiele, who teaches in the same seminary in which Dr. Caemmerer teaches, has this to say concerning the subject at hand (in a paper with which we must otherwise differ severely): "In this same category of questionable and pietistic opinion" as the communication, which is such a heresy today, between the dead and ourselves through some contact, "we must place the no doubt well-meant, but equally erroneous opinion and talk about our beloved dead knowing about us and taking an interest in us after their death and while we are still living here on earth. Aside from the fact that such admissions in one way or another can be connected with the hagiolatry [saint-worship] of Rome, it is also in violation of the truth that the dead are dead, and that we are beyond their ken, as they are beyond ours. Still, in a publication of our church, not long ago, a man expressed his appreciation to certain people who had sent memorial gifts in honor of his father, who had recently died, that in addition to the gratitude he himself felt, he was also sure that 'Dad' knew about these gifts and was also very happy about them. This, too, implies some sort of communication for which we are without warrant in the New Testament."

Prof. Thiele goes on to say: "Perhaps, also, it is right here where we can find the settling truth in the sometimes argued matter of 'Prayer for the dead.'" Over against which we shall again set Dr. A. C. Piepkorn's Eucharistic Prayer for the souls of the dead: "We also remember before Thee, O Lord, Thy servants and handmaidens, N. and N., who have gone before us with the Sign of Faith and are now fallen asleep. To them, O Lord, and to all that rest in Christ, we beseech Thee to grant Thy mercy and everlasting peace." (*Una Sancta*, Pentecost, 1947, p. 12.) Dr. Piepkorn, who also teaches at Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, faults our synod severely for teaching in its Catechism explanation that we should not pray for the souls of the dead. (*The Seminarian*, June, 1954.)

What a confusion of tongues indeed in St. Louis! It is this kind of thing that caused a brother to say recently when he learned that a memorial tower is to be built at our Concordia Seminary in St. Louis: At Babel

they built a tower, and then they had the confusion of tongues, in St. Louis the process is being reversed. There they are having the confusion of tongues first, and then they are going to build the tower.

❶ Why Pray for the Souls of the Dead?

In an article, "Why Pray for the Dead?," the national Catholic Action weekly *Our Sunday Visitor* (June 1, 1958) says: "Without Purgatory, prayers for the dead would be meaningless." We agree. Yet, Dr. A. C. Piepkorn, who teaches at Concordia Theological Seminary in St. Louis, has for many years been permitted to advocate prayer for the souls of the dead. Not only that; but he faults our Catechism most severely for teaching that we should not pray for the souls of the dead. (*The Seminarian*, June, 1954.)

Here is the prayer of Doctor Piepkorn for the souls of the dead, which he advocates as a part of the Eucharistic service or the "Mass" of our High Church people: "We remember before Thee, O Lord, Thy servants and handmaidens, N. and N., who have gone before us with the Sign of Faith and are now fallen asleep. To them, O Lord, and to all that rest in Christ, we beseech Thee to grant Thy mercy and everlasting peace." (*Una Sancta*, Pentecost, p. 12. Cp. *Confessional Lutheran*, Dec., 1951, p. 137f.)

We wonder just what kind of "rest in Christ" it is supposed to be that those who have died in faith are thought of enjoying in the imagination of such as insist we should still pray that God might "grant them mercy and everlasting peace."

This is the kind of thing that is going on under our present official leadership. Is it what you want? If not, don't you think you ought to make yourself heard?

P. H. B.

❷ Must We "Restudy" Everything?

The Bible says that a minister must be "apt to teach" (I Tim. 3, 2). On all Christian ministers it inculcates: "Preach the Word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine." (II Tim. 4, 2-3.) And in His Great Commission to the Church, the Lord has enjoined all of us to teach those who have been won as disciples of Christ to observe all things whatsoever He has commanded us. (Mt. 28, 20.)

Liberalism says, "You must restudy your doctrinal position." The only thing it wants us to be sure of is its own doubt and unbelief. And that line is now being accepted within the Missouri Synod. We are told that we must "restudy" this and that, of which we have been divinely convinced and sure these many years.

Can anyone fail to recognize in such a demand the same voice which in Eden asked: "Yea, hath God said?"

This familiar line of Liberalism is indeed as old as that, — and as fatal!

P. H. B.

❸ Some Recent Instances of the Leaven of High-Churchism Within the Missouri Synod

(EDITORIAL NOTE: The present article is part of an essay on The High Church Movement within the Lutheran Church assigned by the Southern Regional Conference of the Iowa District East of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod. It was read and accepted with thanks by the conference, which embraces the southern half of the district, at its spring session, April 22-23, 1958. This acceptance included also the two Footnotes which immediately follow the article. A committee was moreover appointed to take action in the name of the conference with reference to the matter in hand. — P. H. B.)

The HCM, most simply defined, is Roman Catholicism parading under another name.

The heart of this movement is a false doctrine of the Church and of Church Fellowship, resting on a confusion of the Church in the proper or strict sense of the word, the whole and exclusive number of true believers in the Vicarious Satisfaction of Christ or the (invisible) mystic body of Christ ("And this Church alone is called the Body of Christ, which Christ renews" etc., Apol. VII:5; Trigl., p. 227) and of the "Church" or "churches" in a wider sense of the word, i.e., the mere outward fellowship of those who gather about the Word and Sacrament.

"Movement" refers to the fact that the adherents of this cult have never organized a church of their own, but use various existing churches, inclusive of our own Missouri Synod, to support themselves and to disseminate their leaven, while practicing church fellowship more or less freely across confessionally synodical lines with kindred spirits wherever they may find them.

Lest I be charged with merely warming up some ancient mess of pottage, I shall at the outset refer to several instances of public teaching within the Missouri Synod in which

High Church sectarians are disseminating their error today.

In the March issue of the *Seminarian*, "A Student Journal of Theological Opinion and Discussion" published by the Concordia Students' Association at Concordia Theological Seminary, St. Louis, Mo. (the general theme of which issue is "Church at Worship"), the leading feature article is "A Blueprint for Your Catholic Parish." Of this article, by the Rev. Berthold von Schenk, one of the associate editors of the *Seminarian*, says that its author "restores our faith in the parish by centering it in a lived liturgy, and orienting it around the weekly Eucharist." Besides many other false and un-Lutheran things, the author of this article says:

"The Church is not a Synod or a confederation of congregations, but as Luther states, *die Gemeinde der Heiligen*, or those who gather on the Lord's Day about the Holy"; and again, just a bit farther on: "Those who gather in Jesus' Name are His body." And still again: "The *ecclesia* is the coming together of the baptized, for this is the meaning of the word, *ecclesia*." (P. 8.)

Luther, of course, did in his Large Catechism say that the Church is the "congregation of saints." But he did not by any means define this spiritual gathering as Dr. von Schenk would have us believe he did. On the contrary, the great Reformer, at the given place, says: "To speak correct German, it [the phrase "the communion of saints" in the Creed] ought to be *eine Gemeinde der Heiligen* [a congregation of saints], that is, a congregation made up purely of saints, or, to speak yet more plainly, *eine heilige Gemeinde* [a holy congregation]. I say this in order that the words *Gemeinschaft der Heiligen* [communion of saints] may be understood, because the expression has become so established by custom that it cannot be well eradicated, and it is treated almost as heresy if one should attempt to change a word. But this is the meaning and substance of this addition; I believe that there is upon earth a little holy group and congregation of pure saints, under one head, even Christ, called together by the Holy Ghost in one faith, one mind, and understanding, with manifold gifts, yet agreeing in love, without sects or schisms." (Large Catechism, The Creed, Art. III:50-51; *Trigl.*, p. 691.) So also in his explanation of the Third Article of the Creed in the Small Catechism: "I believe that the Holy Ghost has called me by the Gospel . . . even as He calls, *gathers*, enlightens, and sanctifies the whole Christian Church on

earth." (Our emphasis.) In short, Luther and our Church are here simply speaking of what is in the Bible called "the great congregation" (e.g. in Ps. 22, 25), or "the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven" (Hebr. 12, 23), the gathering of God's eternally elect in Christ. Thus the Lutheran Church also confesses in Arts. VII and VIII of its Augsburg Confession, in the former of which it defines the Church essentially as "the congregation of saints," and in the latter of which it says: "The Church properly is the congregation of saints and true believers." Such a simple proposition of faith, however, is foreign to the theology of High Church men like Dr. von Schenk.

Concerning the marks of the Church, the author of "A Blueprint for Your Catholic Parish" in the *Seminarian* goes on to say (p. 8): "Not doctrines and confessions are the mark of the Church, but Jesus Christ in His person."

This is again directly contrary to what the Lutheran Church believes, teaches, and confesses. For, having in Art. VII of the Augsburg Confession defined the Church as to its essence as the congregation of saints, our Church immediately goes on to add the marks of that Church, saying: "in which the Gospel is rightly taught and the Sacraments are rightly administered." (*Trigl.*, p. 47.) This simple truth is repeated over and over again in the Apology, — e.g. in the statement that the fellowship of faith and of the Holy Ghost in hearts "has outward marks so that it can be recognized, namely, the pure doctrine of the Gospel, and the administration of the Sacraments in accordance with the Gospel of Christ. (Namely, where God's Word is pure and the Sacraments are administered in conformity with the same, there certainly is the Church, and there are Christians.)" Art. VII and VIII:5; *Trigl.*, p. 227. May I add what our Church here wants to emphasize, over against Romanism, is this: We cannot see the Church (true believers in the Vicarious Satisfaction of Christ); but we can recognize that which alone begets saving faith in the heart — the pure Word of the Gospel and its Sacraments — and which thus incorporates men into the One true Church, the true, spiritual, invisible unity of the saints of which Art. VII of the Augsburg Confession speaks. "And this Church alone is [in Holy Scripture] called *the Body of Christ*, which Christ renews (Christ is its Head) and sanctifies and governs by His Spirit, as Paul testifies, Eph. 1, 22f, when he says, *And gave Him to be the*

Head over all things to the Church, which is His body, the fullness of Him that filleth all in all. Wherefore those in whom Christ does not act (through His Spirit) are not the members of Christ." (Apol. VII:5; *Trigl.*, p. 227.) The Lutheran Church will have none of the horrible error of a *visible body of Christ*, which has become so widespread within the Missouri Synod, especially also among High Church men, since the subversive "Forty-Four" introduced it in 1945. That our Church is in Art. VII of the Augsburg Confession speaking of the invisible fellowship of the Church in the proper sense of the word (and not of the requirements of outward confessional fellowship) is made crystal-clear in the corresponding Art. VII of the Apology. So, e.g., when it says: "We are speaking of true, i.e., of spiritual unity (we say that those are one harmonious Church who believe in one Christ; who have one Gospel, one Spirit, one faith, the same Sacraments; and we are speaking therefore of spiritual unity), without which faith in the heart, or righteousness of heart before God, cannot exist." (Art. VII:31; *Trigl.*, p. 237.) The Lutheran Church here once for all rejects necessity of agreement in Liturgy towards this unity, — which is precisely what Rome and its children in the HCM so insistently demand. This is the "*satis est*" ("It is enough") of Art. VII of the Augsburg Confession: "And to the true unity of the Church it is enough to agree concerning the doctrine of the Gospel and the administration of the Sacraments. Nor is it necessary that human traditions, that is, rites or ceremonies, instituted by men, should be everywhere alike." "The question is, whether the observance of human traditions are acts of worship necessary for righteousness before God." (Apology, VII:34; *Trigl.*, p. 239.) (For the requirements of outward, confessional fellowship we must turn elsewhere in our Church's Confessions, e.g. to Art. X of the Epitome of the Formula of Concord, *Trigl.*, p. 831: "agreement among churches in doctrine and all its articles, as also in the right use of the holy Sacraments"; or to the Concluding Statement of the Formula of Concord concerning the Requirements of Confessional Fellowship among Lutherans of the Augsburg Confession, *Trigl.*, p. 1095: "No room is given to the least error.")

Contrary to all of this, we read in "A Blueprint for Your Catholic Parish" (p. 8f): "The first task of the overseer of the flock of God is to show his people the beauty and the wonder of the Liturgy and what this service really means. Then he should insist

that this full service be used, not only of the Word but also of the Sacrament, for these two are not separated in the *ecclesia*. [Recall that as defined by the author of A Blueprint for Your Catholic Parish "the *ecclesia* is the coming together of the baptized, for this is the meaning of the word, *ecclesia*." According to High Church men like Dr. von Schenk there can be no real service without the Sacrament.] This is his responsibility, for he is the steward of the Mysteries of God, the Sacraments [see the first Footnote below], and it is his duty to dispense these mysteries. When a congregation is properly informed there will rarely be opposition to this plan. What opposition does occur should not deter the pastor. He is performing his job. People will take exception to other things he says and does, but this does not excuse him from doing his duty as a pastor. The members of the congregation must realize that the full Liturgy is the source of life and that a congregation lives out of the Liturgy. Of course, the pastor should know what he is talking about. He should know that the Liturgy always was at the center of the Christian life and that this is the functioning Body of Christ; for thus the Church can continue the life of Christ and relive it; and through this service is the person and office of the risen Lord continued. The Liturgy is the meeting of the baptized in the Name of Jesus. [Compare above: "The *ecclesia* is the coming together of the baptized, for this is the meaning of the word, *ecclesia*." So the Liturgy is the Church, and the Church is the Liturgy, the *ecclesia*. The Liturgy is just everything!] . . . When the baptized meet in Jesus' Name, He is in the midst of them. He is there. Since His life was so varied and full, we divide His life into the Liturgical Church Year. Thus we are there when He changes water into wine; when He feeds the five thousand; when He casts out the demons, and so on. This is the Real Presence. . . . The continuation of the Old Testament priesthood, fulfilled by the great High Priest, is in the royal priesthood, and its participation in the Liturgy. Without the Mass there can be no priesthood functioning in this sense. For this reason the sacrificial thought was basic in the early liturgies. The Church of the Middle Ages created a new kind of priesthood, utterly foreign to the spirit of the early church. The Reformation Church quickly followed this error and created a hierarchy of theologians (for it was much more important to have a system of doctrines than to maintain the full Lutheran Mass), so that

today the chief service has degenerated into a preaching service to which now and then the communion is added as an appendix. When this new hierarchy robbed the Lay-priest of his Liturgy and of his function as a royal priest, the Offering was also lost. This was the great robbery." [See the second Footnote below.]

A second source of recent HCM leaven to which I would refer is *Portals of Prayer* (Concordia Publishing House), April, 1958 issue. Writing about what Acts 2, 42 says about continuance in congregational fellowship in the first church at Jerusalem (May 29, p. 46), the Rev. Herbert Lindemann, says: "The strengthening of our faith and the practice of Christian love requires association with other believers. Some of the early church fathers even went so far as to say that outside the church there is no salvation." On what Acts 2, 42 says about the prayers of the first congregation in Jerusalem Pastor Lindemann says (May 31, p. 48): "The church through the ages has held daily services in every parish, and this is still the intention of liturgical churches today." Concerning the "breaking of bread" in Acts 2, 42 he says (May 30, p. 47): "The bread which we break, says the Apostle, is the communion of the body of Christ. He also says that the church is the body of Christ (I Cor. 10, 16, 17). Hence what Augustine said to his people is mysteriously and wonderfully true: 'You are that which you receive, namely, the body of Christ.'"

Not to extend this paper beyond the limit of time allotted me, I shall just ask: What do you make of the statements of Pastor Lindemann in the publication referred to? I might, moreover, pause here and ask: Is the conference which assigned this paper willing to take an active position with respect to such matters and others like it? And I suggest that there is little point in going on unless this should be the case.

● Two Footnotes

As explained above, the following two footnotes were part of the essay on Some Recent Instances of the Leaven of High-Churchism within the Missouri Synod which was read to and accepted by the Southern Regional Conference of the Iowa District East at its spring session on April 22-23, 1958.

The First Footnote

The first footnote concerns the statement of Dr. B. von Schenk regarding a minister's

being "the steward of the Mysteries of God, the Sacraments."

In Holy Scripture the Church is the spiritual (*oikos*) "house" of God (Christ), I Tim. 3, 15, who is its (*oikodespotees*) "Lord," Mt. 10, 24; its members are the (*oikeioi*) "household," Eph. 2, 19; Gal. 6, 10; and at the same time its (*oiketai*) "domestic servants," Rom. 4, 14; the incumbents of the Public Ministry, the continuation of the Pastoral Office of the Apostolate, are in the sense of special service to Christ and the Church (*oikonomoi musterioon theou*) managers or "stewards of the mysteries of God," I Cor. 4, 1, that is, *not as Rome and A Blueprint for Your Catholic Parish would have it, merely of the Sacraments, WHICH ARE AS SUCH NEVER REFERRED TO AS MYSTERIES IN HOLY SCRIPTURE*, but of the whole of the revealed divine counsel or wisdom of God centered in the Gospel of Jesus Christ, I Cor. 2, 7-10. Particular mysteries referred to in Scripture are the Mystery of the Incarnation, justifying Resurrection, etc. of Christ, I Tim. 3, 16, and the corresponding Mystery of the Revelation of the iniquitous, perditionous papal Antichrist, II Thess. 2, 7; the Mystery of the conversion of all elect Israel, Rom. 11, 25f. and the corresponding Mystery of the Calling of the Fullness of the Gentiles, Eph. 3, 1ff; the Mystic Union of Christ and His Bride, the Church, Eph. 5, 32, and the corresponding Mystery of the Bestial Woman, "Babylon," the Apostate Church, Rev. 17, 5, 7; and the Mystery of the Transformation of the Living at Christ's Final Coming, I Cor. 15, 51f.

According to the only Scripture passage which speaks clearly of this subject and which therefore constitutes our rule of faith concerning it, the general stewardship of all believers is defined as 1) speaking as the (*logia*) "oracles" of God, and 2) rendering whatsoever service in accordance with our God-given ability, I Pet. 4, 10-11. It is tragic to see how sectarian tendencies restrict their victims to an unwarranted limitation of Biblical concepts in keeping with their own immediate interests. Thus High Church men like Dr. von Schenk wrest the Scriptures which speak of the Special Stewardship of the Christian Ministry to a mere Sacramental Stewardship in accordance with their mistaken notion of things. Churchmen dedicated to organizational promotion limit passages which speak of the General Stewardship of Christians to a mere Stewardship of Service with almost all of its emphasis on fund-raising to meet the denominational budget.

Modern "Stewardship Departments" ignore or dismiss as quite foreign to their specific sphere any and all complaints as to the first requirement of Christian Stewardship, clearly stated also in the Lord's Great Commission to His Church: "teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you," Mt. 28, 20. *Church history plainly shows that it is through such false enthusiasm that sects are born.*

The Second Footnote

The following result of an opinion poll of 148 seminarians at St. Louis, a group from each class, should prove interesting in this connection:

"There is a marked 'Romanizing tendency' on our campus. True, 42; False, 91; Undecided, 15."

The following two results may incidentally also prove interesting, although one of them is somewhat aside from our immediate subject:

"The *Seminarian* is contributing to my theological growth. True, 58; False, 75; Undecided, 15."

"The 'immortality of the soul' is a sound, Biblical doctrine. True, 110; False, 33; Undecided, 5."

(The *Seminarian*, March, 1958, p. 50.)

• The Simple Solution of the Problem Before Us

The brief exposition of some recent instances of the leaven of High-Churchism within the Missouri Synod which appears above has not begun to exhaust the symptoms of death and decay which have in recent years appeared in the High Church Movement within our Church. On the contrary, the surface has only been scratched. However, enough has been shown to convince anyone open to conviction that our present Presidium's policy of toleration of error of all kinds is rapidly destroying our church as a confessionally orthodox body. (*Brief Statement*, 29.)

None of us can excuse himself either before God or men if we do not insist on calling our officials to account for permitting this tragedy contrary to the high and holy responsibility which our entrustment of their office has placed on them. The constitution of the Missouri Synod does say: "The President has the supervision regarding the doctrine." (Art. XIB: Duties of the President.) It belongs to our stewardship to insist on putting

a sudden stop in our midst to any and all such false leaven of doctrine as that of the High Church Movement shown above. Do we still have grace sufficient to do this?

• Armed Forces Prayer

That the danger of the development of an "Armed Forces Religion" through misuse of the Chaplaincy in the service of our national government is very real was again brought home through a communication recently addressed to our congregation by a major in the Ordnance Corps.

Announcing Armed Forces Day (May 18) Open House at the Ordnance Depot in Savanna, Ill., the letter stated: "Please find enclosed a copy of the Armed Forces Day Prayer published this year by the Armed Forces Chaplain's Board. We forward this Special Prayer for possible use in your church periodicals and announcements during our National Observance of Armed Forces Day. The prayer clearly outlines the tremendous importance we Americans place on the spiritual guidance necessary to ensure the Defense of our Country."

The "Armed Forces Day Prayer," which might satisfy anyone but a Christian reads as follows:

"O God, our Father in heaven, we rededicate ourselves to Thee and to our Nation on this Armed Forces Day. We praise Thee for the innumerable blessings, both spiritual and material, Thou hast bestowed on our Armed Forces. Keep us always conscious of our high calling and mindful of our most sacred responsibilities as the guardians of our priceless liberty. Endow us richly with every grace of soul that we may be faithful to Thee in the performance of our duties as soldiers, sailors, airmen, and marines.

"May we ever hold sacred the memory of our heroic dead. Inspire us with their spirit. Be our refuge and our strength, so that in all battles of life, we may be valiant in service to Thee and to our great United States of America. Amen."

Should not this Chaplains Cult be resisted?

P. H. B.

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• May the Resurrection of All the Dead on the Last Day Now be Openly Questioned or Denied Within Our Circles?

Lutheran Witness of 1958

Under the caption "Are there two resurrections?" the *Lutheran Witness* of Jan. 28, p. 17, in the column "What's the Answer?", stated the following:

"Question: Who are the souls referred to in Rev. 20:4, 5, who lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years? And who are the rest of the dead which lived not again until a thousand years were finished? What is meant by the first resurrection? Are there two resurrections?"

"Answer: Mankind is here as elsewhere divided into two classes, believers and unbelievers (Matt. 25:32, 33; John 3:18). St. John is speaking of people who have died, the departed martyrs and other believers. He sees their souls (Rev. 6:9), but makes no mention of their bodies. This strongly indicates that the first resurrection is not a physical, but a spiritual resurrection, the conversion of sinners to God (Rom. 8:10; Eph. 2:5, 6; Col. 2:13) which makes them partakers of spiritual and eternal life even now (John 3:36; 5:24; Eph. 2:5; I John 5:12) and participants in Christ's all-glorious rule in heaven (Luke 22:30; Rom. 5:17; Rev. 20:4). For believers, death brings complete deliverance from sin and death and full restoration of life (I Cor. 15:54-57). There is only one physical resurrection (John 5:28, 29; 6:40).

"The rest of the dead, the departed unbelievers, do not share in this life and rule with Christ. Living and dying in trespasses and sin (Eph. 2:1, 12), not being born again by the life-giving Word (John 3:5; I Peter 1:23), they are doomed to suffer the second death, eternal damnation (Matt. 25:46; Rev. 20:15).

"The thousand years, a round figure, not to be taken literally, began with the completion of Christ's atonement (John 12:31; 16:11) and will last to the end of time. During this period the preaching of the Gospel has liberated uncounted numbers of people from the power of darkness and translated them into God's kingdom (Col. 1:13). Thus Satan has been bound. Just before Judgment Day, he will be loosed for a short time to resume his vicious attacks upon the church (Rev. 20:7-9). This is the period described by Christ in Matthew 24 and Luke

21, in which faith will be hard to find on earth (Luke 18:8). Then the Lord will return for judgment. For believers this will be the day of their final redemption (Luke 21:28), while for the unbeliever it will mean the second death, eternal damnation (Rev. 20:15). Blessed and holy is he that has part in the first resurrection; on him the second death has no power (Rev. 20:6)."

In short, the answer of the *Lutheran Witness* to the question "Are there two resurrections?" is: No, "there is only the physical resurrection (John 5:28, 29; 6:40)."

In this the *Lutheran Witness* agrees with the Brief Statement, "Scripture clearly teaches . . . that there will be but one resurrection of the dead, John 5:28; 6:39, 40." (Par. 42.)

It also agrees with our Small Catechism, "and will on the Last Day raise up me and all the dead."

And this has always been the official doctrinal position of the Missouri Synod up until the St. Paul convention of 1956, when a report was adopted which manifestly denies this truth.

The 1956 ACDP Report

By a mere majority vote the Missouri Synod, contrary to Article VIII C of the Constitution, and therefore illegally, was declared to have adopted the 1956 Report of the Advisory Committee on Doctrine and Practice. That Report says: "Since the passage (Rev. 20:4) is difficult to interpret, and since the interpretation which is referred to" (namely, that those beheaded for the testimony of Christ will be *physically* raised before the Last Day, the Day of Judgment) "cannot be regarded as a contradiction of clear passages of Scripture when we accept the limitation. . . . If this is explained as signifying that their bodies will be taken into heaven and that they will be enjoying the happiness of the mansions above even before Judgment Day, we agree that we need not protest the view as heretical. We do not accept it as our view." (ACDP Report, 1956, p. 12:66.)

In other words, it "cannot be regarded as a contradiction of clear passages of Scripture" to hold or teach a *twofold resurrection of the dead* — the one, a special resurrection embracing certain martyrs and occurring at the beginning of a supposed millennial reign of Christ; the other, the universal resurrection embracing the rest of the dead and occurring on the Last Day, "if this is explained as signifying that their bodies," that

is, the bodies of such martyrs, "will be taken into heaven and that they will be enjoying the happiness of the mansions above even before Judgment Day."

"An Exception From the Rule"

The *ACDP Report* cites the statement, "Of course, the raising of the martyrs would then have to be considered an exception from the rule which Jesus teaches, John 6:40." It also cites *Lehre und Wehre*, 1872, p. 75, in which Dr. Walther would allow that the "peculiar opinion" of Selnecker (in affirming individual exceptions) "does not nullify the rule, that according to God's Word, when Christ will appear for Judgment, the universal resurrection of the good and evil will take place." (P. 12:62.)

But the *ACDP Report* completely ignores the words of Dr. Walther which immediately follow. "But when chiliasts maintain a solemn, special resurrection of all believers or of all martyrs and confessors as occurring a thousand years before Christ's coming to Judgment, then they do not let the rule stand (regarding which they maintain an exception), but they completely overthrow the rule, namely, the article of the universal resurrection of the good and evil on the Last Day. Hence it is that the teaching that a special physical resurrection precedes the so-called millennial kingdom has ever been regarded in our Church as a mark of crass and damnable Chiliasm."

The *ACDP Report* contends that it does not deny the *one* resurrection of all the dead on the Last Day but would only grant an "exception from the rule which Jesus teaches, John 6:40." But by granting that a special physical resurrection of certain martyrs as occurring before the Last Day may be held, it clearly allows the holding to *two* resurrections. It clearly allows that it is not a contradiction of clear passages of Scripture to hold or teach *two* resurrections — the one a special resurrection embracing certain martyrs and occurring at the beginning of a supposed millennial reign of Christ; the other, the universal resurrection embracing the rest of the dead and occurring on the Last Day, if it is explained that the bodies of such physically raised martyrs are taken into heaven before Judgment Day.

An "Open Question" (?)

In view of these facts we would ask the following.

Is the question: "Are there two physical resurrections, or, is there only one physical

resurrection of all the dead?" from now on to be regarded as an "open question" within the Missouri Synod, that is, a question "which Scripture answers either not at all or not clearly"?

Expressed in other words: May the physical resurrection of *all* the dead on the Last Day now be openly questioned or denied within our circles?

D.

ON THE UNION FRONT

L.W.F. Issue Re-opened in the Missouri Synod

The question of the Lutheran World Federation — to join or not to join — was settled by the St. Paul convention of the Lutheran Church — Missouri Synod, in the negative. (*Proceedings*, 1956, pp. 537-538.) Twelve dissenting votes were counted.

But debate on the matter has continued apace, heightened by events surrounding the Minneapolis Assembly of the Lutheran World Federation in 1957.

In a supplement to its April, 1957, issue, *The Lutheran Layman* published the critique of the Lutheran World Federation by Dr. Herman Sasse, Australian Lutheran theologian. This critique was accompanied by words of approbation from Dr. J. W. Behnken, Missouri Synod President. Shortly thereafter Dr. Behnken posed three doctrinal questions which pointed up some of the issues. (*Confessional Lutheran*, June 1958, p. 71.)

This opening gambit was met by an apparently organized barrage from all directions, on the part of Missourian liberals.

Sparking the liberal reaction was Dr. M. L. Kretzmann, Missouri Synod Seminary President in India. His page-long letter in answer to Dr. Sasse was published in *The Lutheran Layman*, Aug. 1, 1957, p. 7. He concluded that the Missouri Synod "should be in" the Lutheran World Federation, and the World Council of Churches as well. Letters of reaction on this debate were printed in *The Lutheran Layman*, Sept. 1, 1957, pp. 4, 5, 11. Most of them favored Dr. M. L. Kretzmann's views. One of the letters in opposition to Dr. Kretzmann's liberal views, written by (Teacher) J. E. Springer of San Diego, Calif., deserves special mention, because it brought the clear word of Scripture to bear upon the vagaries of the liberal Missourians.

Muddying the Waters

Meanwhile, Missouri liberals have been using the pages of their periodical, the *American Lutheran*, in continued propaganda favoring Missouri Synod membership in the L.W.F., and attacking the Synod's Scriptural stand on fellowship as written into its *Brief Statement*. Notorious in this respect was the publication, in the *American Lutheran*, of Dr. O. A. Geiseman's "An Open Letter" to the Lutheran World Federation Assembly. (See *Confessional Lutheran*, Sept. 1957, pp. 86-87.) *Lutheran Herald*, official organ of the Evangelical Lutheran Church, was so elated over this expression of rebellion against the Missouri Synod's principles by one of its own members, that it reprinted "An Open Letter" in full (Aug. 20, 1957, pp. 778-779). *Lutheran Standard*, official organ of the American Lutheran Church, likewise rejoiced editorially over this "fraternal" expression of Dr. Geiseman toward the L.W.F. (Sept. 28, 1957, p. 15.)

And now the American Lutheran Publicity Bureau, in a mailing post-marked May 19, 1958, is advertising reprints of *Look* magazine's recent article, "The Lutherans," "for distribution to the members of your congregation" and "for class and discussion group study." This pro-L.W.F. material may be expected to mislead more Missouri Synod members, causing them to forsake Scriptural principles of fellowship.

The Lutheran Chaplain, published by the Armed Services Commission of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, in its regular feature "Vapor Trails," written by Prof. M. H. Scharlemann, commended the Lutheran World Federation Assembly as "one of vigorous confessionalism." The writer, in his comments, overlooked the fact that the only confessional pronouncements issued by the Assembly, the "51 Theses," were as indefinite and unstable as vapor, and that the Assembly was so lacking in confessional vigor that it did not "adopt," but only "received for further study," even this equivocal confessional platform. (See *Confessional Lutheran*, June 1958, p. 72.)

Clouds on the Horizon

Ominous, in this whole picture of the reign of uncertainty within the Missouri Synod on the L.W.F. issue, is its effect on Missouri's ministerial students. An opinion poll on various questions was conducted by the *Seminarian*, student journal at Concordia Seminary, St. Louis. When 176 students were asked to express their opinion on the state-

ment, "The Missouri Synod should eventually join the Lutheran World Federation," 73 answered "yes," 68 replied in the negative, and 35 were undecided. *Lutheran Standard* (May 10, 1958, p. 4) considered this bit of news important enough to include in a survey of Missouri's "ties with the Lutheran World Federation." *The Lutheran Layman* (Feb. 1, 1958, p. 7) also published a survey of the student poll.

More Meetings

It may be that the leaders of the Lutheran World Federation will get some results due to the clamorous insistence of its fifth column within the Missouri Synod. Pressure is being applied to get Missouri to change its official stand declining membership in the L.W.F. All this is made clear in a report on the matter in *The National Lutheran*, Nov.-Dec., 1957, pp. 21-22, which reads in part:

"In a general appraisal of the Assembly, Dr. Lund-Quist stressed that one effect of the Assembly on Lutheranism in America was to build a strong support and understanding among many members of the Missouri Synod.

"Late in September, Dr. Franklin Clark Fry and Dr. Lund-Quist presented the resolution to top leaders of the [Missouri] synod at a meeting in Chicago. Dr. John W. Behnken, president; Dr. Arnold H. Grumm, first vice president; Dr. Alfred Fuerbringer, president of Concordia Seminary, St. Louis; and Dr. W. A. Baepler, president of Concordia Seminary, Springfield, Ill., were told that the LWF commission on theology will study the bases and functions of the federation during the coming five-year period and that the synod will be invited to take part.

"At a press conference, Dr. Lund-Quist described the meeting as 'friendly.' He said that the synod representatives 'spoke very positively of the results of the Minneapolis Assembly,' and expressed hope that the Missouri unity committee will re-examine its stand opposing LWF membership."

The Lutheran Witness (June 3, 1958, p. 3) reports that Missouri's two Seminary Presidents will be sent to the meeting of the Commission on Theology of the L.W.F. at Oslo, Norway, in August. As to the mission of these Missouri representatives, *The Lutheran Witness* says:

"At the meeting in Oslo the two seminary professors are to convey to this representative group of the federation the reasons for the action of the 1956 synodical convention, declining membership in the LWF.

"The men will also receive the commission's reactions and discuss the points on which agreement still needs to be reached between the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod and the LWF before Synod can consider membership in the federation."

Note those good words: "... agreement still needs to be reached . . . before Synod can consider membership in the federation." Furthermore, a long list of "points on which agreement still needs to be reached" could be sent by mail, at the cost of postage only.

Next time: More on the Missouri Synod and the L.W.F. Is Missouri's officialdom changing course?

A. V. K.

CORRECTION: In the June issue, p. 72, third Paragraph, line 12, "equivocal" should read "unequivocal."

☉ Just a Poor Joke?

Before us lies an announcement of the new *Service Book and Hymnal* of the National Lutheran Council. The announcement, coming through Augsburg Publishing House, reads: "For the first time since Lutheranism was brought to our shores in 1638, the followers of Martin Luther in America have a common book of worship."

We have long known the arrogance of Liberalism and Modernism, which is represented also by the indifferent and unionistic National Lutheran Council. The National Council, with which the National Lutheran Council is affiliated, brazenly announces itself as "The National Council of the Churches of Christ in the USA." Besides purporting to be a monopoly of "the Churches of Christ" in our country, proponents of the denials of Christian faith represented by this fellowship invariably claim to have cornered also the market on Biblical scholarship. And now the National Lutheran Council comes along and announces itself as "the followers of Martin Luther in America."

Are we supposed to take this as just another poor, tragic joke? Are we supposed to take it lying down? Does the Missouri Synod still have a Public Relations department? Are the real heart relations of those entrusted with this department and the National Lutheran Council perhaps such as to make an honest apostle of the Missouri Synod to say: "Ye suffer . . . if a man exalt himself, if a man smite you on the face"? (II Cor. 11, 20.)

Will there be proper words regarding this matter from our officialdom? Or will there be that continued silence which speaks so much louder than words, and of which there has now already for so long a time been altogether too much?

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☉ What Our Readers Say

"We have read the *Confessional Lutheran*, which explains some of the differences between the liberal and the conservative pastors of the Missouri Synod.

"We are moving to — —. We know there are Missouri Synod churches there. Could you send us a list of such as are opposed to Boy Scouting and unionism?"

Layman, Wisconsin

* * * *

"Enclosed please find a check for \$50.00 for the *Confessional Lutheran*."

Mr. and Mrs. H. B——, Illinois

* * * *

"Enclosed \$2.75 is for a subscription for the *Confessional Lutheran* and copies of the March, April, and May 1953 issues, dealing with the RSV.

"I was brought up in the Lutheran Free Church, and was graduated from St. Olaf College in Northfield Minn. I was a member of a Presbyterian Church for a few years because my husband is a Presbyterian. Last fall I joined a Missouri Synod Church. I do not approve of the National Council of Churches or World Council.

"About a month ago I wrote to the *Lutheran Witness*, pointing out many verses which have been entirely omitted in the RSV among other things I don't like about the RSV. I told them that they could print my letter if they so desired. Rev. M. Mueller answered by saying that they had received several letters like mine, and that they were

not printing any of them because the Advisory Committee was working with the Bible translators and suggesting changes for the 1962 version.

"Then I wrote a letter to Rev. Mueller in the form of about ten questions, and I received a letter from Oscar Feucht, secretary of the Advisory Committee. He enclosed the two Resolutions — one passed at the Houston convention and the other at the St. Paul convention. The only question of mine which was answered was the names of the Advisory Committee. He sent me some booklets, most of which are put out by the National Council of Churches. Naturally, they are all for the RSV. I am now wondering what changes are contemplated for the 1962 version.

"If you are interested, this is the last paragraph of Oscar Feucht's letter: 'Let me assure you that we are not just blindly accepting the RSV or any other version, but on the other hand we must not keep a tool which the Holy Ghost can use from our church.'

"I am opposed to the social Gospel, modernist ideas, and the entire program of the National Council of Churches, and I know that I shall enjoy reading the *Confessional Lutheran*."

"May God bless you."

Mrs. ———, Minnesota

EDITORIAL NOTE: Regarding Dr. Feucht's specious argumentation that "we must not keep a tool which the Holy Ghost can use from our church" (which covers up all of the destructive errors of the RSV) — in such a case we could neither "keep from our church" the Roman Catholic Bible nor a multitude of other things against which we rightly warn our people that there is death in the pot. Luther himself came to a saving knowledge of the truth within the Roman Catholic Church. Regarding Pastor Mueller's evasion, that "the Advisory Committee was working with the Bible translation and suggesting changes for the 1962 version," — this ignores entirely the fact that we have before us the 1952 version with all of its soul-destroying errors. (The 1962 version, which could conceivably turn out worse than the present RSV, will be judged if and when it becomes a reality.) "It seemed exceedingly necessary that, amidst so many errors that had arisen in our times, as well as causes of offense, variances, and these long-continued dissensions, there should exist a godly explanation and agreement concerning all these contro-

versies, derived from God's Word, according to the terms of which the pure doctrine might be discriminated and separated from the false. Besides, this matter is of importance also in this respect, viz., that troublesome and contentious men, who do not suffer themselves to be bound to any formula of the pure doctrine, may not have the liberty, according to their good pleasure, to excite controversies which furnish ground for offense, and to publish and contend for extravagant opinions. For the result of these things, at length, is that the pure doctrine is obscured and lost, and nothing is transmitted to posterity except academical opinions and suspensions of judgment." (Preface to the Book of Concord, *Triglotta*, p. 23.) How far removed from such historical Lutheranism the stock-in-trade of liberalism is which is represented by the above evasions and suspensions of judgment concerning the RSV (which is *diligently promoted by the same people* under more favorable circumstances) any intelligent Christian ought to be able to see. And the results within the Missouri Synod, that the pure doctrine is obscured and lost, is also evident on every hand. — P. H. B.

☉ Will Some One Supply This One Copy?

Dear Dr. Dierks:

Permit me to express my gratitude to you for so kindly turning over the several issues of the *Confessional Lutheran* missing from our set. As Pastor Burgdorf may have indicated to you, we are anxious to have the set bound so that the proper precautions can be exercised in preserving it for posterity.

All we need at present to complete our set is Volume 1, number 11. I am hoping that this also may turn up soon. It is amazing how costly it becomes to maintain a serial as the *Confessional Lutheran* in an unbound form.

Gratefully yours,

Aug. R. Suelflow, Director
Concordia Historical Institute

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MOTTO: *Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you: but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment.* — 1 Cor. 1, 10.

"We have no intention of yielding ought of the eternal, immutable truth of God for the sake of temporal peace, tranquillity, and unity (which, moreover, is not in our power to do). Nor would such peace and unity, since it is devised against the truth and for its suppression, have any permanency. Still less are we inclined to adorn and conceal a corruption of the pure doctrine and manifest, condemned errors. But we entertain heartfelt pleasure and love for, and are on our part sincerely inclined and anxious to advance, that unity according to our utmost power, by which His glory remains to God uninjured, nothing of the divine truth of the Holy Gospel is surrendered, no room is given to the least error, poor sinners are brought to true, genuine repentance, raised up by faith, confirmed in new obedience, and thus justified and eternally saved alone through the sole merit of Christ." — Concluding Statement of the Formula of Concord concerning the Requirements of Confessional Fellowship among Lutherans of the Augsburg Confession. Trigl. Conc., p. 1095.

"It has been our purpose . . . that all unlawful, doubtful, suspicious, and condemned doctrines, wherever and in whatever books they may be found, and whoever may have written them, or even now may be disposed to defend them, might be exposed, distinctly repudiated, so that every one may be faithfully warned against the errors, which are spread here and there in the writings of some theologians, and no one be misled in this matter by the reputation (authority) of any man." — Formula of Concord (Thorough Declaration), Comprehensive Summary; Trigl. Conc., P. 857.

"These highly important matters (the business of religion) concern also the common people and laymen (as they are called), who, inasmuch as they are Christians, must for their salvation distinguish between pure and false doctrine." — Formula of Concord (Thorough Declaration), Comprehensive Summary; Trigl. Conc., P. 853.

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IN THIS ISSUE: A Work of Divine and Christian Love — The Evangelical Principle in the Confession of the Lutheran Church — Dealing With Error and Errorists — Must We Deal Personally with Every Errorist Within Our Confessional Fellowship? — Is Missouri's Leadership Evangelical? — The Position in Which We Find Ourselves Today — Missouri and Modernism — Professor Thiele's Denial of the Immortality of the Soul and His "Resurrection" Doctrine — What Does it Mean? — When All Men Speak Well of Us — False Doctrine has Slain Its Thousands; Indifference and Unionism Its Tens of Thousands — What Are the Requirements for Confessional Fellowship Among True Lutherans? — The Proper Understanding of Article VII of the Augsburg Confession — Hypocrites and the Church — In the Church But Not of the Church — What Our Readers Say

❶ A Work of Divine and Christian Love

One must distinguish properly. There are two kinds of rebuke, imprecation, and threatening: one, official, on God's account; the other, personal, when this is done outside of

an office for one's self. It becomes the office which Christ held on earth and which everyone holds after Him who is called into it, to speak the truth and to reprove what is evil. This is necessary both for the honor of God and for the salvation of souls. For if everyone were to be silent about the truth, who

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"As soon as we look more to our synod than to the
invisible kingdom of God, the kingdom of grace and salva-
tion, we begin to be a sect. For this is really the essence
of sectarianism that one has his eye on his little fellowship
above all, even though the kingdom of God may suffer
harm thereby." "That preacher is no true preacher who
merely seeks to fanaticize his congregation for the Lutheran
Church, or for the Missouri Synod, or, worse still, only for
the Iowa District. Such men are bad preachers. They must
rather direct people to Christ and say: See, we preach the
pure Word of God, in which the everlasting Gospel of
Christ is continued; that is why you should adhere to us,
and therefore we say, Leave us as soon as we no longer do
this! For salvation by no means depends on us, nor also on
the Missouri Synod. So if it no longer preaches the pure
Word of God, then it is worthy of nothing but that one
forsake it." — Dr. C. F. W. Walther, "Concerning the Chief
Obligations Which a Synod Has if it Rightly Wants to Bear
the Name of an Evangelical Lutheran Synod." Doctrinal Essay
at the First Convention of the Iowa District of the Lutheran
Church—Missouri Synod, 1879; Proceedings, pp. 112, 114.

would come to God? And such an office of
reproof is a work of divine and Christian love.
For it is such an obligation that God has laid
upon the parental station, so that whereas
the highest degree of love is implanted into
their nature by God, father and mother must
nevertheless if they are pious parents and
love their children right dearly not laugh nor
let it be alright when they see the disobe-
dience of their children; but must punish them
both by word and with sharp switches. Such
stripes are official stripes and buffetings of
love, which one owes them and which have
been commanded by God; and they are not
harmful, moreover, but profitable, as Solo-
mon says, Prov. 13, 24: "He that spareth his
rod hateth his son; but he that loveth him
chasteneth him betimes." And Jesus Sirach,
chapt. 30, 1: "He that loveth his child keeps
it constantly under the rod, so that he may
afterwards experience joy through him."

Thus everyone may and should also re-
buke where this is required by one's office or
one's neighbor's need and where it is profit-
able for improvement, as Solomon again says,
Prov. 27, 6: "The wounds of a friend are
better than the kisses of one who hates us"
etc. For they are good words and stripes
which proceed out of a faithful heart; an
enemy on the contrary can give one good
smooth words out of a false, bitter heart and
will rather let you go ahead and perish than
warn you of danger or rescue you from your
destruction by rebuke. Why, a faithful pious
doctor must frequently in a case of necessity
sever a member from the body at the expense
of great pain to the patient in order to save
the whole body. Thus St. Paul enjoins pious
pastors to be instant in season, out of season,
to reprove, rebuke, exhort with all suffering;
II Tim. 4, 2; Tit. 2, 15. For if one were also
yet to praise such as sin or do wrong or to
strengthen them by silence, this would not
be to love them, but to give them over to the
devil and death.

Out of such love and out of such a faith-
ful heart Christ, too, in His office, rebuked
and reprovved and indeed earned Himself
nothing but wrath and hatred thereby, and,
as the saying goes, asked for a beating; but
He had to do it because of His office and did
it so that he might convert men from their
blindness and wickedness and save them from
destruction; and He did not leave this un-
done even though He had to expect and suffer
persecution, crucifixion, and death because
of it.

Luther, St. Louis Edit., XII, 554-555.

● The Evangelical Principle in the Confession of the Lutheran Church

The Lutheran Church (we are not speaking of Lutheran churches) is truly evangelical. In its historic confessions it has rightly declared: "For the preservation of the pure doctrine and for permanent godly unity in the Church it is necessary, not only that the pure, wholesome doctrine be rightly presented, but also that the opponents who teach otherwise be reproved, I Tim. 2 (II Tim. 3, 16); Titus 1, 9." (Formula of Concord, Thorough Declaration, Of Articles in Controversy; Trigl., p. 855.)

The Lutheran Church has therefore laid down the following thoroughly evangelical principle in the confession of the truth:

"We have no intention of yielding aught of the eternal, immutable truth of God for the sake of temporal peace, tranquility, and unity (which, moreover, is not in our power to do). Nor would such peace and unity, since it is devised against the truth and for its suppression, have any permanency. . . . Still less are we inclined to adorn and conceal a corruption of the pure doctrine and manifest, condemned errors. But we entertain heartfelt pleasure and love for, and are on our part sincerely inclined and anxious to advance, that unity according to our utmost power, by which His glory remains to God uninjured, nothing of the divine truth of the holy Gospel is surrendered, *no room is given to the least error*, poor sinners are brought to true, genuine repentance, raised up by faith, confirmed in new obedience, and thus justified and eternally saved alone through the merit of Christ." (Concluding Statement concerning the Requirements of Confessional Fellowship among Lutherans of the Augsburg Confession; Trigl., p. 1095. Our emphasis.)

This evangelical principle of Lutheranism we will in nowise surrender, so help us God!

P.H.B.

● Dealing With Error and Errorists

We must distinguish between error on the one hand; and the erring, or errorists, on the other hand.

1. *Error* must always be rejected without delay, and in such a plain way as to leave no doubt that it is being honestly rejected. A contrary course is unevangelical, because the eternal welfare of souls is at stake. It is this elementary truth that the Lutheran Church has underlined in saying: "These highly im-

portant matters, the business of religion, concern also the common people and laymen, as they are called, who, inasmuch as they are Christians, must for their salvation distinguish between pure and false doctrine." (Formula of Concord, Thorough Declaration, Comprehensive Summary; Triglotta, p. 853.) That is why our Church has also said (and we have subscribed to this important Christian principle): "It has been our purpose. . . . that all unlawful, doubtful, suspicious, and condemned doctrines, wherever and in whatever books they may be found, and whoever may have written them, or even now may be disposed to defend them, might be exposed, distinctly repudiated, so that everyone may be faithfully warned against the errors, which are spread here and there in the writings of some theologians [Lutheran theologians, even a Melancthon, are meant], and no one be misled in this matter by the reputation, authority, of any man." (Comprehensive Summary; p. 857.)

2. *Dealing with the erring or with errorists* is another matter. Here evangelical love may require much patience, depending on circumstances. We shall not begin to describe the numerous circumstances which may be involved in dealing with the erring, and their many possible ramifications. This is a subject in itself. But one thing must always remain clear: *There dare be no procrastination in rejecting error itself* when dealing with the erring or with errorists. If an errorist will not himself admit his error, it should be promptly disavowed by such as must deal with him. If an errorist be a teacher in the Church, it must moreover be made clear to him that he dare not teach his error while he is being dealt with. A contrary course would again be un-evangelical because of the souls that are at stake.

These are elementary, fundamental Christian principles. An honest, simple application of these Scriptural principles would, under God, solve Missouri's troubles (and those of any church) overnight.

P.H.B.

● Must We Deal Personally With Every Errorist Within Our Confessional Fellowship?

Mt. 18, 15ff is often misused (ignorantly, we hope, in all Christian charity) as a defense mechanism against our evangelical testimony against error.

What does Mt. 18, 15ff require of us?

First of all, let it be noted that this classic passage concerning brotherly admonition speaks specifically of *congregational discipline*. No one other than the Church represented in any given locality has had committed to it the right to declare a manifest, impenitent sinner as belonging in one and the same class with a heathen and a publican. This means, properly, the true believers at such a place, who represent a true part of the Church, even though they be but two or three in number, and who thus represent the Church in any congregation which at all has the pure Word and the Sacraments, or what is the same, the outward marks of the Church.

A synod can and should *expel from its confessional fellowship* such as persist in denial of the truth in doctrine or in life; and more especially should it see that those who are guilty of such trespasses are excluded from the teaching ministry of the Church. Such procedures, however, are not identical with what is spoken of in Mt. 18. We by no means necessarily pass judgment on the personal faith of everyone not permitted by us to teach in the Church, or on anyone and everyone who makes it impossible to be in external, confessional fellowship with us. Such procedures, moreover, rest on other passages of Scripture, which we do not wish to discuss at this time.

In other respects the principles laid down in Mt. 18 apply generally within larger church bodies as well as within local congregations.

But here note again one thing which Scripture distinctly does not say and require: Scripture does not by any means require that when a sin either in doctrine or in life is *already public* we must in every case still deal with the transgressor as though this were after all still a private matter. Whether one may, moved by Christian love, still want to do this depends on circumstances. Certainly, the fact that the souls of others are imperiled dare in such a case never be ignored. This would plainly be contrary to the demands of Christian love.

In a synod, such as ours, the necessary machinery has been set up for the very purpose of properly taking care of situations in which false public teaching is involved. It is the clear *duty of responsible officials* to deal properly with error and errorists whenever and wherever they may raise their head. Officials should not need to be asked especially to do this. They should unhesitatingly do as much of their own accord by virtue of the

responsibility of the office entrusted to them. And certainly, if officials who for any reason may have overlooked some public error have the same called to their attention, there should be no delay in doing what their duty plainly demands of them. Any contrary course is unevangelical and contrary to Christian love.

Whoever may not know these simple, fundamental truths knows neither the Scriptures nor the nature and purpose of synods, such a one certainly does not know the Missouri Synod and its historic Lutheran confession. And whoever would demand to the contrary that every member of Synod deal personally with every public error and with every public errorist within our body in the case of each new transgression, consciously or unconsciously advocates a false principle (not to speak of his lending himself to the protection of error) and just to that extent himself becomes guilty of false teaching.

We shall never yield to such an unevangelical demand.

P.H.B.

● Is Missouri's Leadership Evangelical?

The first object of the Missouri Synod, as stated in its Constitution (Art. III, 1) is: "The conservation and promotion of the unity of the true faith (Eph. 4, 3-6; I Cor. 1, 10) and a united defense against schism and sectarianism (Rom. 16, 17)." That this is indeed in keeping with the evangelical principles confessed by the Lutheran Church will be seen by reference to the Scriptural passages quoted.

"The President has the supervision regarding the doctrine." (Art. XI.)

In accordance with these evangelical principles, should not we who are members of the Missouri Synod be able to look to our officialdom for protection against error, especially when it rises in our own midst?

Yet, what do we behold? Is it not undeniable that we see longstanding, officially unrejected, and ever increasing error everywhere about us? (An extensive catalog of errors which had already by then been permitted to gain a foothold within the Missouri Synod is contained in the June, 1955, issue of the Confessional Lutheran.)

In a recent communication, a historian of note who is not of our own particular fellowship yet vitally concerned lest our synod go down the drain of indifference and unionism

like so many other churches before it, because he regards it as a last bulwark of confessional Lutheranism in our day, dropped the observation that "No church is as bad as its government." While one may want to challenge such a statement to the extent that one may know of one or the other exception to it, history does teach that as a rule the disintegration of churches has begun at the top. But who is going to accept history as a teacher? Is not just this the greatest lesson that history teaches: *that men will not learn from history?*

In how far the observation recorded above applies to the government of the Missouri Synod the ever multiplying errors everywhere about us will bear out.

And with that the question should be clearly answered: Is the Missouri Synod's present leadership evangelical?

P.H.B.

● The Position in Which We Find Ourselves Today

We are referring to our position within the Missouri Synod as a confessional body (not just a structural organization).

Is it not true that instead of enjoying that official support and protection which we ought to be enjoying under our Constitution those of us who are within the Missouri Synod still upholding the evangelical principle of confessional Lutheranism that we will not tolerate the least error are left to battle against error quite alone?

Worse than this, is it not a fact that there are being diligently spread against us such suspicions as that we are "separatists," "extremists," and "disturbers of the peace" in general, while ever increasing error of all kinds enjoys a Roman holiday?

That we are not separatists our patient and loving support of our synod in its historic Scriptural and confessionally Lutheran position over against the errors which are destroying its confessional character more than sufficiently testifies. That we must appear as extremists to such as confessedly occupy a middle-of-the-road say-nothing do-nothing position as over against a proper confession on the one hand and outright error on the other hand we freely admit. As for the ill-founded charge that we are the trouble-makers in Israel today — a charge always made precisely by those who are actually the ones guilty of this sin — we hurl it back in this day of such general worship of the baalim of doctrinal in-

difference and unionism, as Elijah hurled it back into the face of the royal head of the visible church-state in his day of similar apostasy, I Kgs. 18, 18.

We are not dismayed by such calumniation. We know that they have always been made against God's people. We are in good company, and we must expect such abuse.

We are *in statu confessionis*, — in a position demanding confession of us against the multitude of errors which are destroying our church as a confessional body. God helping us, we shall not relax our evangelical testimony. We shall rather, God continuing to help us, prove unbending in this respect whatever the odds against us may seem to be or not to be. On the other hand, anyone and everyone wishing to join us or welcoming assistance from us in this direction will never find us wanting.

This is our evangelical position.

P.H.B.

● Missouri and Modernism

Under the official policy which has been in force within the Missouri Synod during the last two decades, two things have been happening. 1. Error has been increasing at an ever accelerating rate. 2. Error of an ever more serious nature has been rearing its head.

One of the crasser errors that has come to light during recent years (we are confining ourselves to doctrinal errors which are public) is Conrad Coyner's denial of the Scripturalness of the doctrine of Christ's Descent into Hell and his observation that it originated in heathen mythology. It is a piece of the rank Modernism of our day.

Another instance of crasser Modernism within our Synod is Dr. Thiele's more recent denial of the Immortality of the Soul and his peculiar doctrine of a "resurrection."

It is not our purpose to recount the many doctrinal errors which exist within the Missouri Synod today. We rather want to make a general observation at this time. It is this: It is altogether safe to say that if the Missouri Synod is permitted to go on but another decade in the course which it has been permitted to take during the last twenty years, it will have been delivered up to Indifferentism, Unionism, and Modernism quite as completely as have various Lutheran and Reformed sects before it.

This is not really a prediction. It is just a plain historical observation of what is actually going on before our eyes. Only a sudden

arresting of the already ongoing process, under God, could change this course of events.

Are you ready to lend a hand in such an evangelical undertaking? Or are you possibly going to wait and stand by until you have to hear the cry: Too little and too late! when and if you finally should get ready to do something about it?

Now is the time for all good men to come to the help of their synod!

P.H.B.

❶ Professor Thiele's Denial of the Immortality of the Soul and His "Resurrection" Doctrine

Among the most grievous errors to make their appearance within the Missouri Synod up to the present time are errors contained in a recent paper by Prof. Gilbert Thiele of St. Louis on "The Resurrection of the Body and the Immortality of the Soul." The paper clearly reflects Modernism and its processes of reasoning and of dealing with Scripture with respect to both of these doctrines. In this respect it rivals the essay by Conrad Coyner which does not find the Doctrine of Christ's Descent into Hell in Scripture, but derives it from heathen mythology. (Pastor Coyner's essay received express faculty approval at Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, and has subsequently been defended by our highest officialdom.)

Professor Thiele received his doctor's degree from the University of Basel in Switzerland in 1954 and has since 1955 been on the faculty of Concordia Seminary, where he teaches Historical Theology. The paper referred to was prepared for the Pastoral Conference of the English District of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, meeting at Concordia Teacher's College, River Forest, Ill., and presented there on June 13, 1957. It was later presented at the Pastoral Conference of the northern and western section of the Michigan District, meeting at Camp Arcadia, on Sept. 13, 1957. A summary of it appeared in the March, 1958, *Seminarian*. The same issue of the *Seminarian* published a Campus Opinion Poll of 148 students (a group from each class, taken during class time, with faculty permission). 33 of these students labeled as false the statement that "The immortality of the soul is a sound, Biblical doctrine." 5 had no opinion; 110 still considered the statement true. On May 1, 1958, Prof. Thiele's paper was read at the meeting of the Presidium of the Lutheran Church—Missouri

Synod and the Faculty Senate of Concordia Seminary in St. Louis. The May, 1958, *Seminarian* contained a "Special Notice" (p. 8) reading as follows: "1. The article in the March, 1958, *Seminarian* 'Easter Hope: The Resurrection of the Body or the Immortality of the Soul,' should have been entitled 'The Resurrection of the Body and the Immortality of the Soul.' 2. The article, because of its abbreviated form, did not fully express the author's concern for adequate emphasis on the correct teaching of the Sacred Scriptures regarding the Resurrection of the Body and the Immortality of the Soul as opposed to philosophical aberrations. The author of the article affirms his conviction that an existence survives temporal death, and that Christians at their departure are immediately with Christ. The article is to be understood in this light." Whether the article be entitled one or the other way as indicated above makes little if any difference. That the author expresses the conviction that "an existence survives" temporal death (in the case of Christians) — a statement which any Modernist would subscribe — no intelligent reader of the abbreviated article in the *Seminarian* could possibly have failed to understand. But neither could the fact that the author's conviction regarding the Immortality of the Soul and the Resurrection of the Body are not those of our historic Christian faith escape any intelligent reader who is at all familiar with the language and the terminology with which the paper operates. The author's "concern for adequate emphasis on the correct teaching of the Sacred Scriptures" is something different from a concern for what Scripture actually does teach with regard to these subjects. It in itself represents one of the many modernistic philosophical aberrations in this field, which of course necessarily differs from others. That fact appears even more clearly and fully in the complete paper than it does in the abbreviated article; and in this respect the latter can therefore be said to be at least somewhat inadequate for fullest critical examination, though not for the rejection that the paper demands. Copies of the paper are obtainable at the author's address.

Dr. Thiele's basic assumption is to be found in the following statements (p. 13): "Man is a unit." "You cannot slice him up [dichotomy] and have this part of him going there and another there." "Regenerate or unregenerate, he is one man and entire, with or without Christ. And so will his eternity be that of a man as a unit, no soul-immortality,

and flesh-mortality, or pneuma [spirit-soul] bliss and soma [body] oblivion." All of this despite clear Biblical passages like Eccl. 12,7: "Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and the spirit shall return [for judgment] to God who gave it."

On the basis of such denial of Biblical truth, Dr. Thiele says (p. 5) that a "perversion," which he labels a tragedy, "has become part of the sum and substance of much theology known to us. When we so speak: You have an immortal soul, for which Christ died, to save it, and when we die, our soul(s) go to God and to heaven. Is that not comforting? — When we so speak, we are speaking by adaptation the language of Plato, of Lessing, of the English and Continental Enlightenment thinkers, of Masonry, of the worst of all Early-Church heresies, Gnosticism, of Docetism, we are speaking with John Haynes Holmes (The Affirmation of Immortality, 1947)."

Under "Death—the Old Testament View," Dr. Thiele says: "The burden of texts coming into question here, and the almost common consent of Old Testament scholars today [which is pretty much equivalent to saying: of Modernism—PHB], is that the immortality of the soul or person and the resurrection were, alike, not known or, at least, certainly not current or important. It was, after all, a time of provisional covenanting and not even of that measure of completion which the New Testament offers. At most, we can say that what there is in the Old Testament of a belief in personal survival is very un-Greek, and also very inarticulate." (P. 7.)

Widening his assertion, Dr. Thiele says, under the heading "Death or Immortality: Is there a choice?" (p. 10f): "The Bible, in its length and breadth, knows of no disembodied condition in which man lives, temporarily, and certainly not permanently, knows, therefore, neither a temporary or permanent human immortality as such."

What of the classic passage in Job (19, 26) concerning the resurrection? Dr. Thiele says: "The Job passage in all probability does not refer to resurrection or even to immortality, since he appeals to a vindicator other than God to protect him against God, and he is certain that such a vindicator will come, even though he is stripped, so that he stands in skinless flesh!" (P. 11.) Ps. 73, 23-26, the last part of which the author translates "Though my flesh and my heart should have been exhausted, rock of my heart, yet God is my portion forever," receives similar treat-

ment, so that like the great Job passage, it no longer stands in the author's way: The poet "looks for eventual change here, and not at some time after death." (P. 11.)

In concluding this part of his paper (Death), Dr. Thiele says (p. 12): "We can not find proof if the resurrection is not brought in that man lives at all after death, provisionally or eternally." We must add, already here, that Dr. Thiele's peculiar view of "resurrection," besides involving denial of immortality of the soul, leaves no room for the resurrection of the unjust, which is so clearly taught for instance in the words of our Lord, John 5, 29.

But just what is Dr. Thiele's view of a "resurrection" (limited to the just)? Suffice it to say that it is full of confusion, contradiction, and oddities; and that it is centered in the peculiar statement that the new man (in this present life) becomes "*a spiritual body*."

We shall let Prof. Thiele speak for himself, excerpting from his paper its most important passages towards setting forth his own peculiar view of a "resurrection."

"Man has a body, [Greek:], soma, which is afflicted by certain features of the sarx [the Greek word for flesh, having various meanings in Holy Scripture, according to its context], is carnal, so to speak, but is inhabited in the new man by the pneuma [a Greek word, according to its context meaning spirit, among other things, and as such equivalent also to the human soul, but not in Dr. Thiele's usage]. He becomes, in other words, a pneumatic person, a spiritual body [Note Dr. Thiele's change from "person" to "body"] that is the temple of the Pneuma Hagion [the Holy Spirit]. As we shall see, the sarx is never to be resurrected, rather to be put off permanently, and so the nephesh has a similar fate. [The Hebrew word *nephesh* means spirit or soul, through which the body lives; so, e.g., in the passage: "The Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul." Gen. 2, 7. But Dr. Thiele says that this word should not be translated "soul" at all. "We would probably translate it his personality. . . . never considered to be inherently permanent." "The mortality of flesh and soul, or nephesh, which we should not translate soul at all, is clearly and unbrokenly carried through the entire Old Testament." Etc.] Bios [Greek for "life;" in its Biblical usage, of life as it is lived here, whence our word "biography," as over against the Greek word *Zoe*, which

in Bible usage refers to life in the nobler sense of the word, and thus to spiritual and eternal life] never returns. But by virtue of the Pneuma a new life, called *Zoe*, enters man, enters his soma, and behold he is a new man. He is still 'of the flesh,' but even now he is in the process of putting that off, so that his soma, inhabited by the pneuma, has *zoe*. [Note this: the *soma* has *zoe*; the *body* has life in the nobler, higher sense of the word!] In either case, the sarcic man with a psyche [Greek: soul] and a bios, or the somatic man with the pneuma and a *zoe* is—one. You can not dichotomize, trichotomize [divide into two parts, or three parts], or atomize. Hebrew or New Testament, Old Testament or Christian, man is a unit. The reflection of the Trinity may well reside in his being made male and female, a matter entirely separate from our present discussion, but his unicity is a reflection, if you will, of the unicity of God. You cannot slice him up and have this part of him going there and another there and perhaps a third or fourth going there. Regenerate or unregenerate, he is man one and entire, with or without Christ. And so will his eternity be that of man as a unit, no soul-immortality, and flesh-mortality, or pneuma bliss and soma oblivion." (P. 12-13.)

Concerning the Resurrection of Christ, Dr. Thiele says (p. 18): "It is clear that this was not the resurrection of 'the flesh,' but of the body. If it were, indeed, the flesh, exactly and only as it had died, it would not only have the wounds, the features of the dead Christ, brought to life, but would be subject to another death, as were Jairus' daughter and Lazarus, and the anonymous Nainite. Besides, the limitations particularly of space would still be operative also for Him." Note that Dr. Thiele here leaves out of account the *glorification* of Christ, which the dead bodies of individuals restored to earthy life by Christ had not yet experienced.

Referring to the demythologization technique identified with the theology of Rudolph Bultmann as "the most famous denial in the last twenty years" (it should really be regarded as infamous), Dr. Thiele says (p. 24): "Unfortunately there is just enough truth in what he has been saying since 1941 to make us listen. For Bultmann denies, as he should, immortality of a partial human being, viz., the soul without anything else."

Under the Resurrection on the 'Last Day' Dr. Thiele says (p. 25): "Man is given a new life in the body, that will never cease. He is, if you will, immortal from then on, totally

immortal. But since he has obviously been mortal before that, we had better avoid the absolutism of the syllable 'im' and simply say that the mortal man that has died is raised to the new life and a deathless existence from then on." "We are correct, then, in saying that the resurrection on the last day is the resurrection of the bodies of the dead, even as the Resurrection of Jesus was the resurrection of the dead body of Jesus. In other words, soma without sarx, not bios but *zoe*, pneuma but not psyche are involved." (P. 27). "When the sarcic element is brought in, or even when the somatic element is overstressed, the way is too easily opened for the carnality of millennialism at its grossest and cheapest level." (P. 28.)

Suffice it to say that, aside from other considerations, Dr. Thiele seems to hold the Neo-Lutheran view (which is to say the view of Lutheran Modernists) that the germ of a resurrection "body" is created in believers here and now, which can in some sense be said to be "raised up." What he teaches is in any case not historic Christian faith. "Will there be some sort of mass peregrination to the throne of God," he asks, "out of the depths of the sea, out of the innumerable graves, catacombs, crypts, urns, and other places of disposal?" His answer: "Is not this too fanciful to bother us, really?" (P. 28.)

Our Lord has said (John 5, 28-29): "The hour is coming in the which all that are in the graves shall hear His Voice, and shall come forth." And when the Apostle says of the body of the blessed dead "It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body" (I Cor. 15, 44), he does not say that the blessed are to be spirits (pneuma) according to their body. The resurrection body will be spiritual as to its quality, not as to its substance, according to which it will still be a body, the identical body which it was here, but glorified. Christ "shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto His glorious body, according to the working whereby He is able even to subdue all things unto Himself." (Phil. 3, 21.) "This corruptible must put on incorruption," I Cor. 15, 53.

We still believe what Job proclaimed as his great hope and what Christendom sounds forth as the sublime theme of its most magnificent Easter hymns: "I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth; and though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God; whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another." (Job 19, 25-27.)

Evangelical procedure, and so also the principles laid down in the historic Confessions of the Lutheran Church and in the Constitution of the Missouri Synod, require that teachings such as those of Dr. Thiele be rejected without official delay. A contrary procedure is unevangelical, because of the eternal welfare of immortal souls which is involved. It is as un-Missourian and un-Lutheran as it is un-Scriptural.

Let not our seminaries, which we are supporting for the promulgation of the historic Christian faith be misused to destroy that faith!

P.H.B.

● What Does It Mean?

Accompanying the paper of Dr. Thiele on "The Resurrection of the Body and the Immortality of the Soul" which has been discussed in a foregoing article, there is a Note which reads: "As a conference presentation this paper does not intend to be completely definitive. It is submitted for discussion purposes."

What does this mean?

Definitive means as much as defining the subject at hand, explaining it, setting forth its boundaries and excluding what is improper to it; hence, a final and decisive word on it. In the present instance we would then according to the ordinary meaning of that word understand the above statement with reference to Dr. Thiele's paper as meaning that the paper does not intend completely to set the boundaries and limits of the important doctrines of the Immortality of the Soul and the Resurrection of Body, excluding what is improper to it.

But we still ask: What does this mean? For whom is the presentation not to be supposed to be definitive? For the author of the paper; or, for others, to whom it is submitted for discussion? Or perhaps for both?

In the former event, are we to understand that men who themselves have no sure and final convictions with regard to such most important doctrines of our Christian faith as those of the Immortality of the Soul and the Resurrection of the Body are to be permitted to teach in our Church and even to prepare men for the ministry at our chief theological seminary?

In the second event, are we to understand that men who themselves have unsound and false convictions with regard to such doctrines are to be permitted to throw them into

conferences for free discussion and propagandize them publicly, for instance through theological student polls and through their publication in such journals as the (Concordia, St. Louis) *Seminarian*?

In the final instance, (assuming Dr. Thiele's paper to be non-definitive for both its author and for those to whom it is submitted "for discussion"), are we to suspend our divinely wrought Scriptural convictions and to say, We know not whom we believe, while such matters are being "restudied" by all parties concerned, as though they were mere open questions?

This is the method of Modernism. Both its method and its subject-matter are represented by Dr. Thiele's paper.

This is what Missouri has come to today.

Are you going to just let things go at that? Do you, whoever you may be, pastor or layman, honestly think that although you are a member of the Missouri Synod you can do nothing, and yet answer for such a situation before God?

P.H.B.

● When All Men Speak Well of Us

"Woe unto you when all men shall speak well of you! for so did their fathers to the false prophets." (Luke 6, 26.) These words came to mind when we read the Editorial: "Lutherans in the Limelight," in the Swedish Augustana Synod's "The Lutheran Companion," (April 23d, 1958). The editor seems to have been highly flattered by articles on the Lutheran Church which have appeared in recent numbers of *Time* and of *Look Magazine*. He reports their statements to the effect that the Lutheran Church is now making great strides in growth because it no longer sticks so strictly to its Scriptural theology; that "Lutheranism is experiencing the most dramatic new birth" of which the liberal, Modernistic President of the ULC and the LWF, Dr. Franklin Clark Fry, "is the symbol." The editor has no single word of caution or warning against the un-Lutheran, un-Biblical trends which are becoming so strong in all branches of world Lutheranism. Like so many others, he is obsessed by the dream of an externally united church, not too much concerned with the doctrine it teaches. *Time* magazine is quoted with approval, when it quotes Dr. Fry as saying: "American Protestantism of a generation or two ago would have appalled Martin Luther with its fragmentation—some groups exaggerating one or another aspect of

the Scriptures, others almost ignoring the Bible entirely in their emphasis on emotional experience or human fellowship." It must have required truly deep ignorance of Reformation history to make such a statement. For the church of Luther's day was no less torn by dissensions and sectarian, heretical movements than is the church today. Not only the Roman Catholic Church, but also the Zwinglians and Calvinists, the Zwickau prophets and the Fanatics of every hue, raged against the true Bible teachings Luther sought to restore to the world. There was no lack of teachers who "ignored the Bible in their emphasis on emotional experience or human fellowship," and who were condemned by Luther because they wanted to unite with him outwardly, although they were not agreed in doctrine. And what a travesty it is on the truth when Dr. Fry says: "The spirit of the ecumenical movement is the spirit of Luther to the extent that it is a movement back toward the center of the Christian faith." Dr. Fry's WCC would make terms even with the Vatican, which Luther identified as the "very Antichrist." And it both in word and deed shows that it has no room in its program for the central doctrine of Luther and Scripture, that we are justified by faith in Christ alone.

G. O. Lillegard in the *Lutheran Sentinel*.

FALSE DOCTRINE HAS SLAIN ITS THOUSANDS; INDIFFERENCE AND UNIONISM ITS TENS OF THOUSANDS.

● What Are the Requirements for Confessional Fellowship Among True Lutherans

We have frequently called attention to the fact that Article VII of the Augsburg Confession does not speak of the Visible Church and its requirements for fellowship. Also of the fact that it is often (mis)used to set forth the latter, especially by indifferentists and unionists, but also by others. On the other hand, those passages in the historic Confessions of the Lutheran Church which do actually set forth the requirements of outward confessional fellowship are seldom or never referred to by liberals and unionists. Why is this? The reason seems clear. From among many passages which deal with the subject in the Confessions we shall here repeat only the following clear words of the Formula of Concord (Art. X: 7) concerning the truly Lutheran requirement for confessional fellowship. At the same time we shall permit an-

other article to follow this which sets forth the right understanding of Art. VII of the Augsburg Confession.

The emphasis in the passage from the Formula of Concord referred to and here given is ours:

"We believe, teach, and confess also that no Church should condemn another because one has less or more external ceremonies not commanded by God than the other if otherwise there is *agreement among them in doctrine and all its articles, as also in the right use of the holy Sacraments.*"

This is truly and undeniably Lutheran.

It is our own unalterable and evangelical position.

P.H.B.

● The Proper Understanding of Article VII of the Augsburg Confession

Luther's words in his Greater Exposition of the Letter to the Galatians, St. Louis Edition, IX: 42-44, provide an excellent sidelight toward the *proper understanding of Article VII of the Augsburg Confession*.

In Art. VII the purpose is not merely to state the Lutheran or proper concept of the Church, but this article is to be a short summary of the main points of the doctrine of the Church. In it there is stated 1. that; 2. briefly, what; and 3. above all, where the Church is. For thus the words read: 'Also they [that is, our churches, with common consent, Art. I] teach that one holy Church is to continue forever. The Church is the congregation of saints, in which the Gospel is rightly taught and the Sacraments are rightly administered.'

The antithesis to this, as is known, is the position of Rome,—namely, that only the papal kingdom is the Church. Over against this the Lutheran confessors declare that the congregation of all believers or the Holy Christian Church is in its parts everywhere where the Gospel is pure and the sacraments are essentially administered rightly. And the above words of Luther show that according to Lutheran doctrine particular gatherings of the congregation of all saints are to be assumed even also at Rome in the papal churches; for 'they have the Gospel, Baptism, etc.,' or according to the Augsburg Confession: they represent an assembly in which the Gospel is rightly taught and the sacraments are rightly administered.

In the Seventh Article of the basic confession of the Lutheran Church the *true visible* Church is not spoken of; for of it the pure preaching of the Word of God in *all* respects, and not only the right, but also the unmitigated administration of the Sacraments, is characteristic.

In this Article Word and Sacrament cannot be spoken of as the effect or office of the Church, inasmuch as it administers Word and Sacrament, but as the cause of the Church; for the Holy Christian Church can be and remain only there where Word and Sacrament are according to their essence. And Luther in the above reference indeed admits this also of the sects (*Schwaermer*); for even if the Sacrament of the Altar does not remain in its essence among many of them, the Sacrament of initiation, Holy Baptism, nevertheless does, by which the doors of the Church are opened and men are received and admitted within its walls.

That the Augsburg Confession here really regards Word and Sacrament as the means of begetting and preserving believers the subsequent Eighth Article also shows by the words: 'Both the Sacraments and the Word are *effectual* by reason of the institution and commandment of Christ, notwithstanding they be administered by evil men.'

Thus also our basic Lutheran Confession then with our faithful fathers after all acknowledges in Christian congregations here and there, whether they be orthodox or heterodox, so long as the means of grace are essentially among them, as the [actual] local Christian congregations only the sum of those members of theirs who through Word and Sacrament are believers. Hypocrites, however, and the wicked in the congregation do not belong essentially to these.

That the Augsburg Confession is so to be understood also J. B. Carpzov shows in his Introduction to the Symbolical Books [*Isagoge in Libros Symbolicos*—this work by Carpzov, 1607-1657, is the best commentary on the Confessions of the Lutheran Church], where he writes, p. 305f: 'The word Church the Augsburg Confession uses, not in the wider sense in which it includes chaff as well as wheat and in which sense all of those are understood under the name Church who are baptized as over against infidels or pagans and the non-baptized; but in the *strict, proper and original* sense: for the multitude of those who are united with Christ as their Head and among one another through true faith and pure love. . . . and to this meaning the non-sanctified and hypocrites are by no

means contrary who are *mingled* with the Church as regards either doctrine or life. For a group that *consists* of hypocrites and of men who verily and uprightly believe is one thing; a group with which hypocrites are *mingled* is another thing. The Church properly so called is not a group which consists of hypocrites and non-sanctified, but it is a group with which hypocrites and non-sanctified are mingled, as the Augsburg Confession carefully declares at the beginning of Article VIII.'

Word and Sacrament, as already mentioned, as the cause of the Church within the local congregation are at the same time also the marks of recognition of believers as such, but only marks of recognition of the locale and sphere in which a particular congregation of believers is to be found. Word and Sacrament are the sole means of begetting faith, and therefore a partial Church of the congregation of all believers is present only within, not perhaps also without, the circle of those who gather about the Word and Sacrament.

(From an article, "Was ist es um die Kirche?," by W. Georgi, in *Lehre und Wehre*, LIII, 1907, p. 505f. Tr. by P.H.B. The article referred to, running through the Sept., Oct., Nov., and Dec. issues of the volume of the journal referred to, is one of the very best we know of on the subject of the Church.)

Hypocrites and the Church

"Although hypocrites are in that number in which the Church is, they are nevertheless not really in that number which is the Church."—Abraham Calov (1612-1686), cited in C. F. W. Walther's *Stimme der Kirche*, p. 13.

In the Church but not of the Church

"Just as Christ says of His disciples John 17, 14 that they are 'in the world, but not of the world,' so we say also on the other hand that the godless are *in* the Church, but not of the Church."—Johann Gerhard (1582-1637), *Loc. de Ecclesia*, Par. 64.

☉ Missouri and Lodgism in Florida

The *Tampa Morning Tribune* on March 8 carried the following news dispatch from Sebring, Florida.

"Delus E. Hawk, 69, died this morning at an Avon Park hospital after a long illness. He came to Sebring four years ago from Allentown, Pa. He was a member of Faith Lu-

theran Church in Sebring, a member of the Loyal Order of Moose, Fraternal Order of Eagles, and Odd Fellows Lodge in Allentown, Pa."

Faith Lutheran Church is listed as a Missouri Synod congregation in its official records.

• What Our Readers Say

"I am happy to note that you are writing something about The High Church Movement and Romanizing Sacramentalism. I am of the conviction that if this movement increases, confessional Lutheranism will wane, because it seeks to put the emphasis less and less on the WORD! More and more the shell becomes the kernel.—The world needs the virile message of THE WORD OF GOD, THE MESSAGE OF THE GOSPEL."—Pastor-Editor.

* * * *

"I really do enjoy the tenor of your writing, since very many of our good lay Christians, and pastors too, are sorely in need of finding out the real truth of what's going on 'behind the curtains.'—Am sending remittance for Mr. . . . Your editorials have opened his eyes considerably."—Layman, Illinois.

* * * *

"I have been subscribing for your publication for some time. Just this week I put up quite a fight to have our pastor discontinue reading the RSV in our services. I was really surprised to see how many of our members sided with me. In the church council meeting I was the only one who cast a dissenting vote, but in the regular member meeting there was not even that first vote for the RSV. So it cannot be used in our services any longer.—I feel that the information obtained from your *Confessional Lutheran* did the job. I am very thankful to be able to get information from such a body as yours.—I would like about 30 copies of your *Confessional Lutheran* to pass out to help me solicit subscriptions for it."—Layman, Indiana.

* * * *

"I pray that God may bless your writing in the *Confessional Lutheran* according to His word, and teach us laymen what God tells us, and not some man-made word."—Layman.

* * * *

"The first paragraph in your September (1957) issue alone is worth more than a year's subscription. It is terrifying to note how the inconducive handling of the 'Forty-Four' by the Presidium has hamstrung our Synod during all this time." Pastor, Nebraska.

"After a span of three years in the military service, two of which were spent in Germany, and now a lengthy two year stretch in the Twin Cities, I have indeed been disgusted and terrified with the trend of Lutheranism all over the world. I call it a very sad state of affairs. The modernistic trend of the Lutheran churches here in the Twin Cities is sad, and this includes my own Missouri Synod. Among our chaplains overseas it is no better, if not worse. A pastor here in Minneapolis told me he considered your publication trash.

"I have often wondered how best to get the news of the poor condition of the Lutheran Church to the laymen. The liberal pastors aren't doing it. Only through such men as my home pastor are people becoming aware of the situation. He is a man who is a true blessing to Christianity and the Lutheran Church. Your magazine is also a tremendous mouthpiece for the conservative Lutherans. We thank God always for men such as you, who are not afraid to speak the truth to those who are falling. Our prayers are with you. Being a student, I cannot offer you much financial aid, but I wish to help a little if I can. I ask God to grant me strength that I too may speak for conservative Lutheranism, and that you may continue your wonderful work."—Student, St. Paul, Minn.

* * * *

"I do not wish to miss an issue. . . . In this day of confusion, turmoil, stress, and strain in the church we need a paper like the *Confessional Lutheran*, which points out all the false doctrine prevailing in the Lutheran Church as well as in other churches."—Pastor, Ohio.

* * * *

"I am enclosing \$2.00 for a *Confessional Lutheran* subscription. Please enclose information as to how I can obtain more material on this line of thought."—Layman, St. Paul, Minn.

* * * *

"For the enclosed \$2.00 please renew my *Confessional Lutheran* subscription. This periodical is sorely needed in our day, and appreciated very much by me. God bless your efforts to bring the Missouri Synod back to the old paths."—Pastor, Minnesota.

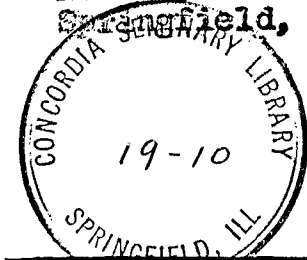
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MOTTO: Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you: but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment." — 1 Cor. 1, 10.

"We have no intention of yielding ought of the eternal, immutable truth of God for the sake of temporal peace, tranquility, and unity (which, moreover, is not in our power to do). Nor would such peace and unity, since it is devised against the truth and for its suppression, have any permanency. Still less are we inclined to adorn and conceal a corruption of the pure doctrine and manifest, condemned errors. But we entertain heartfelt pleasure and love for, and are on our part sincerely inclined and anxious to advance, that unity according to our utmost power, by which His glory remains to God uninjured, nothing of the divine truth of the Holy Gospel is surrendered, no room is given to the least error, poor sinners are brought to true, genuine repentance, raised up by faith, confirmed in new obedience, and thus justified and eternally saved alone through the sole merit of Christ." — Concluding Statement of the Formula of Concord concerning the Requirements of Confessional Fellowship among Lutherans of the Augsburg Confession. Trigl. Conc., p. 1095.

"It has been our purpose . . . that all unlawful, doubtful, suspicious, and condemned doctrines, wherever and in whatever books they may be found, and whoever may have written them, or even now may be disposed to defend them, might be exposed, distinctly repudiated, so that every one may be faithfully warned against the errors, which are spread here and there in the writings of some theologians, and no one be misled in this matter by the reputation (authority) of any man." — Formula of Concord (Thorough Declaration), Comprehensive Summary; Trigl. Conc., P. 857.

"These highly important matters (the business of religion) concern also the common people and laymen (as they are called), who, inasmuch as they are Christians, must for their salvation distinguish between pure and false doctrine." — Formula of Concord (Thorough Declaration), Comprehensive Summary; Trigl. Conc., P. 853.

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• The Triumph of Evil

We have said this before, but it is worth repeating, — repeating often: ALL THAT IS NECESSARY FOR THE TRIUMPH OF EVIL IS THAT GOOD MEN DO NOTHING (Edmund Burke).

• The Fate of Pious Pastors

It is the fate of pious pastors that besides suffering persecution by the ungodly, thankless world and founding congregations amid

much labor and danger they must also suffer that what they have built up by pure doctrine over a long period of time is soon torn down by enthusiasts (Schwaermer) who afterwards also rule and are preferred to them. This evil hurts pious pastors more than any persecution with which tyrannical men can afflict them. Let him who does not want to be despised and suffer such unbecoming treatment therefore not become a servant of the Gospel, or if he already be such let him commit his office to another. It is this kind of thing that we, too, are experiencing these

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"As soon as we look more to our synod than to the
invisible kingdom of God, the kingdom of grace and salva-
tion, we begin to be a sect. For this is really the essence
of sectarianism that one has his eye on his little fellowship
above all, even though the kingdom of God may suffer
harm thereby." "That preacher is no true preacher who
merely seeks to fanaticize his congregation for the Lutheran
Church, or for the Missouri Synod, or, worse still, only for
the Iowa District. Such men are bad preachers. They must
rather direct people to Christ and say: See, we preach the
pure Word of God, in which the everlasting Gospel of
Christ is continued; that is why you should adhere to us,
and therefore we say, Leave us as soon as we no longer do
this! For salvation by no means depends on us, nor also on
the Missouri Synod. So if it no longer preaches the pure
Word of God, then it is worthy of nothing but that one
forsake it." — Dr. C. F. W. Walther, "Concerning the Chief
Obligations Which a Synod Has if it Rightly Wants to Bear
the Name of an Evangelical Lutheran Synod." Doctrinal Essay
at the First Convention of the Iowa District of the Lutheran
Church—Missouri Synod, 1879; Proceedings, pp. 112, 114.

days. We are extremely despised and plagued
from without by tyrannical men, from within
however by just those people whom we have
made free by the Gospel; likewise by false
brethren. But this is our comfort and our
glory, that we, called by God, have the prom-
ise of eternal life and expect the reward
which eye hath not seen, nor ear heard,
neither hath it entered into the heart of any
man (I Cor. 2, 9). For when He Himself, the
Archbishop Jesus Christ, shall appear, we
shall receive the unfading crown of glory
(I Pet. 5, 4); and He will neither here let
us die of hunger or thirst.

Luther, on Gal. 1, 2 (St. Louis Edit., IX:
41f).

• The Liberal Smear Technique

In advertising a new book, *Collectivism in
the Churches* by Edgar C. Bundy, "News and
Views," published by the National Laymen's
Council of the Church League of America,
recalls:

"When the distinguished author and lec-
turer John T. Flynn revealed certain collec-
tivist trends in Protestant churches in his
famous chapter 10 of *THE ROAD AHEAD*, he
immediately brought down the wrath of left-
wing Protestant leaders and liberals upon his
journalistic head. Mr. Flynn's revelations
were merely taken from the official pro-
nouncements of The Federal Council of the
Churches of Christ in America, with page and
paragraph cited, but this did not prevent
those who were exposed from attacking Mr.
Flynn on the ground that he was a member
of the Roman Catholic Church and therefore
was incompetent to discuss what was going
on in the Protestant world."

The publication named goes on to make
the general observation:

"The standard technique used today and
down through the ages is not to answer the
documentation but to attack the one who
does the revealing. In this way they hope to
silence him or so to discredit him that the
public will not look into the documentation.

"The writer of the Gospel of St. John re-
vealed this technique nineteen centuries ago.
It is recorded in his 8th chapter that, when
the religious leaders of that day would not
accept the claims of Jesus Christ as being the
Son of God, they launched a fourfold per-
sonal smear against Him. In verse 13 they
called Him a liar. In verse 19 they questioned
His paternity. In verse 41 they insinuated
that He was an illegitimate child. In verse 48

and 52 they went as low as any human being could go: they accused Him (the Son of God) of being possessed with the devil.

"As the 'recognized' religious leaders of the day, heads of a vast ecclesiastical system, they had powerful means of disseminating their propaganda. But He was not 'recognized.' He was an intruder in their ecumenicity. He took their members away from them — and the receipts in the treasury dropped as a result. They were tied up with the political system of the day and had powerful backing, for they could deliver the 'church' vote. He only had a group of 'dissenters,' 'splinter groups,' 'rabble-rousers,' 'separatists,' and just plain poor folks who worshipped with Him in the fields and on the street corners instead of in the darkness of the temples. He was a force disrupting communal unity. He was a 'fundamentalist' who was always quoting Scripture instead of citing their 'recognized' professors of theology and social-action chairmen."

What *News and Views* here says is only too true. It has indeed been true through the long history of the Church, and it is true today. Consider the history of the Middle Ages, when one man finally set himself up as the final "authority" in the Church and waged a campaign of annihilation against any and every minority or individual who might challenge his false claims, until he was unmasked as the great Antichrist that he is.

And so it is also with liberalism and modernism in the churches today. Adopting a technique akin to that of the Sadducees and Pharisees of old, akin to that which established Romanism in a later age, akin to that which Bolsheviks have brought to the acme of its perfection in the secular State, they worm their way into influential positions in the Church and use the powerful machinery at their disposal (at the expense of those whose faith they destroy) to discredit any and all who would oppose their aims and dare to stand up for the truth.

Unless the great mass of common folks in the Church realizes this simple truth and take proper action against such a situation, there is little hope for them and their church.

P. H. B.

August of 1957. This Federation includes most of the world's church bodies which carry the name "Lutheran," beside some which bear the name "Evangelical," which include some "Lutheran" congregations and some congregations of the Reformed confession. It also includes some "Lutherans" who have inter-Communion agreements with the Church of England (Anglican). As might be expected, this Federation is infected with religious unionism — the principle of joint religious work and worship without agreement in Scripture doctrine.

The four synods of the Synodical Conference, as well as their free church affiliates overseas, are not members of the Lutheran World Federation. However, one of the four synods, the Missouri Synod, sent 15 "official visitors," expenses paid out of its synodical budget, to the Assembly, mainly as observers.

The public press notices about the Assembly played up its pronouncements on such issues as honesty among politicians, disarmament, and U.S. foreign aid. (The Lutheran Confessional writings emphasize that matters of the state are to be decided by the state, not by the churches.)

Public statements made at the Assembly on matters of religious principle have been released. Conservative Lutherans were hoping that the Assembly would take a firm stand with regard to the doctrines of the Verbal Inspiration of the Bible, the inerrancy of the Bible, the Scriptural, Lutheran, teaching concerning Baptism and the Lord's Supper, and other matters. All such hopes were shattered, however, when the Assembly compromised these matters once more, and, in fact, did not "adopt" any platform of principles at all.

The total cost of staging the Lutheran World Federation at Minneapolis was estimated at a million and a half dollars.

Liberal forces within the Missouri Synod are working hard to get the Synod to join the Lutheran World Federation. Unless they are opposed, there is a likelihood that they will succeed. May God raise up more defenders of Scriptural truth, and prevent such a catastrophe.

(Edit.: the above was taken from a parish bulletin which came to our desk.)

● The Lutheran World Federation Assembly at Minneapolis

Considerable space was given in the press to the Assembly of the Lutheran World Federation, held at Minneapolis, Minn., during

**PROMPTLY RENEW YOUR
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❶ Failure to Recognize the Pope as the Antichrist

In a Reformation Sermon in the year 1687 Spener said: "Whoever does not recognize the papal kingdom as the kingdom of the Antichrist, such a one does not yet stand so firmly but that he may still be misled to it by this or that seduction."

The Scriptural doctrine that the pope is the Antichrist has been officially scrapped within the Missouri Synod, affording a favorable ground for the danger against which Spener warned. The High Church Movement in our midst (tolerated by our officialdom) is proving itself a powerful seduction towards enticing men to accept some of the claims of the papal Antichrist. Through it, more than one individual within the Missouri Synod has already fully succumbed and defected to Rome within recent years.

Where is all of this to end?

"Be not carried about with divers and strange doctrines. For it is a good thing that the heart be established with grace" (Hebr. 13, 9)

P. H. B.

PASS YOUR COPY OF THE
CONFESSIONAL LUTHERAN
ON TO SOME FRIEND

❷ Dr. Piepkorn's Romanistic Doctrine of Ordination and the Ministry

Under date of June 19, 1957, a world-renowned Lutheran theologian who is not of our own particular fellowship wrote the editor of the *Confessional Lutheran* as follows:

"We all feel extremely sorry for the developments in your church which we love and in which we still see one of the last pillars of confessional Lutheranism in the world. I was especially moved by your last issue [of the *Confessional Lutheran*] to reach me (May) with your criticism of the HCM in your church. This is a contagious religious disease, a cancer which must be operated on, as I also have written to Dr. Behnken. I have implored Dr. Piepkorn to sever all connections with the *Una Sancta* people and to give up his treatment of the Confessions, taking individual passages out of their context and neglecting the fact that every statement must be read in the light of the *articulus stantis et cadentis ecclesiae*. Your criticism of his review in *Concordia Theological Monthly* of

January is quite correct, and I had written to him in the same strain. I have called his attention to several problems of the Confessions which need urgent treatment, e.g. a reliable English text of the Augsburg Confession. But he seems to be more interested in chasubles. . . . What your church needs is a clear statement that membership in the Missouri Synod is incompatible with membership in the *Una Sancta* organizations or in any Committee or Department of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the USA. (I have called Dr. Piepkorn's attention to such blasphemers as Oxnam and Nolde.) Furthermore must Missouri clarify its attitude to the Church of Sweden with its fellowship with the Church of England. No pastor of your church can practice intercommunion with any clergyman from Sweden."

It is an appalling fact that Dr. A. C. Piepkorn is permitted to teach the Lutheran Confessions to future pastors at our Concordia Theological Seminary in St. Louis, Missouri, although he does not himself understand them, but rummages through them with Roman eyes. In an essay on "The Sacred Ministry and Holy Ordination in the Sacred Scriptures and in the Symbols and Liturgy of the Church of the Augsburg Confession" (*Una Sancta*, 1955, 4, p. 3ff) Dr. Piepkorn has misconstrued out of our Confessions a Sacrament of Order, like Rome's, conferred by a Sacramental Ordination which is supposed to be "efficacious" by divine right. Following are some of the more pertinent theses of this essay, together with a refutation of Dr. Piepkorn's teaching by our Confessions.

"26. *Contrary to a wide spread misconception, in addition to being described as an office (ministerium; Amt), the Sacred Ministry is also described as an order (ordo; Stand).* "There are other differences between the order (*ordo*) of priests and the people' than the administration of the Sacrament of the Altar under only one kind to the congregation (Apology, XXII, 13). The adversaries 'have acted without right or authority in having forbidden marriage and having burdened the divine status (*Stand*) of priests with perpetual celibacy' (Smalcald Articles, Part III, XI, 1). See also paragraphs 29 and 31 below."

I wonder why Dr. Piepkorn's stops with merely insisting that, in the references given, the sacred Ministry is described as "an order" when it is actually described as "the divine order of priests." In both of these references the sacred Ministry is described as *it exists in the Roman Catholic Church*; and how else should this be described? In Art. XXII of the

Apology ("Of Both Kinds in the Lord's Supper") our Church condemns the "impudence" of the Roman Catholic Church, which admits that its chief reason for withholding the cup from the laity is that its order may be more highly exalted (9). Following this, it goes on to *complain* that in the Roman Catholic Church "there are other distinguishing marks of the order of priests and of the people." The second reference (Smalcald Articles, Part. III, Art. XI) treats "Of the Marriage of Priests."

"Misconception" lies in the fact that Dr. Piepkorn misunderstands what is said here of our own Ministry rather than of Rome's priesthood.

"27. Only those who have been admitted to the Sacred Ministry in the prescribed way ought to administer the duties of this office. 'No one should (debeat; soll) publicly teach or administer the Sacraments in the Church unless he be called in the prescribed way (*nisi rite vocatus; ohn ordentlichen Beruf*)' (Augsburg Confession, XIV). *Rite vocatus* is a thoroughly technical term; in Article XIV it includes and implies Ordination, as may be seen, for instance, from the fact that in the sixteenth century this Article was approved by both the authors of the Papalist Confutation (CR 27, 114f) and the Eastern Orthodox Ecumenical Patriarch Jeremiah II ('Strangely enough, the Patriarch was satisfied with the Augustana's statement on Holy Orders, i.e., that nobody could administer Sacraments and preach the Word of God publicly, *nisi sit rite vocatus et ordinandus ad hanc functionem*'—Geo. Florovsky, 'An Early Ecumenical Correspondence,' in *World Lutheranism of Today; A Tribute to Anders Nygren* 15 Nov., 1950, Stockholm, Svenska Kyrkans Diakonistyrelse Bokfoerlag, 1950, p. 107). In Augsburg Confession, XXVIII, 28, the German *Bischofen*, so *ordentlich gewaehlet* is paralleled in the Latin by *catholicis episcopis*."

It is certainly not clear just what Dr. Piepkorn means to prove by the last reference here, which simply states the fact that in Augustine's time (354-430) bishops of the then still undivided "Catholic" Church were elected in an orderly way.

As for Art. XIV of the Augsburg Confession, if Dr. Piepkorn would but have read that article instead of blindly following Florovsky and repeating after him an evident historical error, he would not have exposed his scholarship and his theology to ridicule as he does, and try to conjure out of the simple

German "orderly call" or the just as simple Latin "rightly called" necessity of ordination. For the statement "*et ordinandus ad hanc functionem*" (and ordained unto this function) does not occur in Art. XIV of the Augsburg Confession at all. Nor is it a "fact" that this Article was simply approved by the authors of the Papalist Confutation. On the contrary, our Church testifies in the corresponding 14th Art. of the Apology: "The 14th Article [of the Augsburg Confession] in which we say that in the Church the administration of the Sacraments and Word ought to be allowed *no one unless he be rightly called*, they receive, but with the proviso that we employ canonical ordination." In its reply to this demand of Rome, which was made (in its Confutation) precisely because ordination is neither implied nor contained in Art. XIV of the Augsburg Confession, our Church insists that Rome's government of bishops and church polity, including its canonical ordination, which is the chief subject of discussion here, "*have been made by human authority*."

"28. Ordination is effective by divine right (*jure divino*). 'Since by divine right the grades of bishop and presbyter are not diverse, it is manifest that Ordination administered by a pastor in his own church is valid by divine right (*jure divino ratam esse*)' (Tractate, 65). The official German translation of this passage is interesting: 'It is past all doubt that when a pastor in his own church ordains a number of qualified persons to offices in the Church such an ordination is efficacious and rightful according to divine Laws (*nach goettlichen Rechten kraeftig und recht ist*).'"

Contrary to what Dr. Piepkorn would make of it, the official German translation of the passage cited says nothing different from what the Latin original says. "Kraeftig" should simply be rendered by its common equivalent, *valid*, corresponding to the Latin *ratam*; not by Dr. Piepkorn's loaded, falsely suggestive "efficacious." The Treatise of the Power and Primacy of the Pope appended to the Smalcald Articles is here not interested in the human rite or ceremony of ordination as such at all, but rather in the *right and power of congregations* as opposed to Rome's episcopal claims, as is clearly shown in the heading of this section ("Of the Power and Jurisdiction of Bishops"). Immediately following the passage cited by Dr. Piepkorn, our Church goes on to say: "Therefore, when the ordinary bishops become enemies of the Church, or are unwilling to impart ordination,

the churches *retain their own right (ius)*. For wherever the Church is, there is the right to administer the Gospel. Therefore it is necessary for the Church [German: "churches"] to retain the right to call, elect, and ordain ministers. And this right is a gift properly given the Church [*proprie*, i.e.: *Only to the church, and to no one else*] which no human authority can wrest from the Church, as also Paul testifies to the Ephesians, 4, 8. . . . Here there belong the statements of Christ which testify that the keys have been given to the Church, not merely to certain persons, Mt. 18, 20. . . . And this is a most common custom of the Church testifies. For formerly the people elected pastors and bishops. Then came a bishop, either of that church or a neighboring one, who confirmed the one elected by the laying on of hands; nor did the ordination consist in anything else than such an act of joint recognition." (Par. 67-70. My emphasis.)

"29. The term 'sacrament' is applicable both to the Sacred Ministry as well as to Holy Ordination, the distinctive element of which is the imposition of hands by a pastor." (We shall here omit the references adduced by Dr. Piepkorn, simply because of their length.)

The word "sacrament" is a non-Biblical word. Its meaning depends on any given definition of the word and its corresponding usage. This will determine the number of sacraments of which it is proper to speak.

In profane Latin, from which the word has been derived, a sacrament referred to any dedicated thing, — e.g. to a soldier dedicated to military service; an oath (of faithfulness); the sum of money deposited in a legal case of litigation as an assurance of good faith and forfeited by a loser.

In the Church's appropriation of this word (used in the Vulgate to translate the Greek *musteerion*) it came to mean any sacred act in which God comes to us with His gifts, blessings, and promises ("sacramental" acts still having this meaning in liturgical parlance as over against "sacrificial" acts) and in this sense theologians spoke of anywhere up to thirty things as "sacraments" until late in the Middle Ages, — not to forget Rome's present-day "Sacramentals" from the sign of the cross (fifty days off in Purgatory; 100 days if made with holy water), blessed candles, the rosary, and a bewildering variety of further prescribed prayers and actions down to the eating of hot cross buns, the mere external use of which (*ex opere operato*) is supposed to be of immense spiritual benefit. However, in its later ecclesiastical usage the word "Sacra-

ment" came to be restricted to a narrower meaning, — namely, that of a sacred act instituted by God in which He offers, gives, and seals unto us the forgiveness of sins which Christ has merited for us, through His Word, accompanied by a visible sign.

In Art. XXIV of its Apology ("Of the Mass," Par. 69; Trigl., p. 409) our Church refers to this restricted use of the word "sacrament" and says: "They are right who define sacraments in the New Testament as being signs of grace. And that, because in a sacrament there are two things, the external sign and the Word; the Word, in the New Testament, is the promise of the remission of sins."

In Art. XIII of the Augsburg Confession ("Of the Use of the Sacraments") the Lutheran Church has once for all made such a definition its own. For here it declares that the churches of our confession "teach that the Sacraments were ordained. . . to be signs and testimonies of the will of God toward us, instituted to awaken and confirm faith in those who use them." Every well informed Lutheran ought to know moreover that in keeping with this confession our Church consistently speaks of but two sacraments when setting forth its own teaching, — viz., the Sacrament of Holy Baptism and the Sacrament of the Altar. Articles on just these two sacraments — no more; no less — are contained in the Augsburg Confession (Articles IX and X); the Apology (IX and X); the Smalcald Articles (Part III, Articles V and VI); the Small Catechism (Parts IV and VI); and the Large Catechism (Parts IV and V). The Formula of Concord treats only of the Lord's Supper (Art. VII), because Holy Baptism had not come into controversy among adherents of the Augsburg Confession, and it was the purpose of this document only to settle such controversies. In the Large Catechism Luther begins the Fourth Chief Part of Christian doctrine by saying: "We have now finished the three chief parts of the common Christian doctrine. Besides these we have yet to speak of our two Sacraments." And the doctrine of the Lord's Supper is introduced by him as follows: "In the same manner as we have heard regarding Holy Baptism, we must speak also concerning the other Sacrament."

While agreeing with our definition of a sacrament, Rome insisted that Lutherans recognize its well known seven papal sacraments. Our Church therefore had to take issue with Roman Catholicism concerning this matter; and this it did in Art. XIII of its Apology, this being the whole purpose of this article ("Of the Number and Use of the Sacraments"), —

a fact of which Dr. Piepkorn does not seem to be aware.

In Art. XIII of the Apology our Church first of all then calls attention to the fact that our Roman opponents approve our definition of a sacrament as given in the Augsburg Confession, which is here repeated: "Signs and testimonies of God's will toward us, through which God moves hearts to believe;" but that "here they bid us also count seven sacraments."

To this our Church replies in general that it is necessary to preserve the sacraments which have been instituted by God, whatever their number may be; that the seven ceremonies referred to are not all alike necessary; that "we do not deem it to be of great consequence even if others count differently for pedagogical purposes *if they but rightly preserve the matter handed down in Scripture.*" (My emphasis.) After these general remarks, our Church disposes of those things which Rome would have us add to the two Sacraments properly so called (Holy Baptism and Holy Communion), in the following order: Penitence, Confirmation, Extreme Unction, Holy Order, and Marriage.

In proceeding to discuss Penitence, Melancthon, who wrote the Apology, first of all lays down a possible broader definition of the word "sacrament" (omitting the God-given outward sign). IF, he says, — "If we call Sacraments *rites which have the command of God, and to which the promise of grace has been added*, it is easy to decide which are properly sacraments. . . . Therefore *Baptism, the Lord's Supper, and Absolution, which is the Sacrament of Repentance, are truly Sacraments. For these rites have God's command and promise of grace, which is peculiar to the New Testament.*" Even under this broadened definition our Church, however, makes short shrift of Confirmation and Extreme Unction as "rites received from the Fathers which not even the Church requires as necessary to salvation, because they do not have God's command."

Coming to holy Order (the Ministry), our Church will first of all hear nothing of the old sacrificial priesthood of which Rome and High Church men make so much; so, e.g., Dr. von Schenk, when, to repeat his words, he says: "The continuation of the Old Testament priesthood, fulfilled by the great High Priest, is in the royal priesthood, and its participation in the Liturgy. Without the full Mass there can be no priesthood functioning in this sense. For this reason the sacrificial thought

was basic in the early liturgies." (The *Seminarian*, March, 1958, p. 11.) Instead, our church exalts that "preaching service" which Dr. von Schenk and High Church men berate so severely. For it says: "The adversaries understand *priesthood* not of the ministry of the Word, and administering the Sacraments to others, but they understand it of sacrifice; as though in the New Testament there ought to be a priesthood like the Levitical, to sacrifice for the people, and merit the remission of sins for others." (Cp. e.g. von Schenk's "When we can understand *how* the elements become the Body and Blood of Christ by Consecration, then we may understand in what manner the offering of these consecrated elements to God the Father is a re-presentation of the Sacrifice of the Cross," *The Presence*, p. 18f.) Only then does our Church go on to say, "But," — and this is all-important: "But if order be understood as applying to the ministry of the Word, we shall not be unwilling to call order a sacrament. For the ministry of the Word has God's command and glorious promises, Rom. 1, 16: . . . Likewise Is. 55, 11: . . ." Indeed, our Church goes on to say further: "If order [Latin: *ordo*; German: *das Sakrament des Ordens*] be understood in this way, we shall neither be unwilling to call imposition of hands a sacrament." Note this! Not only would the term "sacrament" *under proper circumstances* be applicable to the Sacred Ministry as well as to Holy Ordination, the imposition of hands being "the distinctive element of" the latter as Dr. Piepkorn has it; but our Church would under proper circumstances be willing to call imposition of hands itself a sacrament. "For the Church has a command to appoint (*constituere, bestellen*) ministers." It cares not by what external signs it accompanies the conferring of this office.

Finally, our Church points out that Matrimony would require a still wider definition (God's command, and promises pertaining to mere bodily life) in order to be considered a sacrament; but that according to such a definition still other things would have to be regarded as sacraments, some of them even more so, — e.g., government, prayers, alms, and afflictions. "Wherefore, if anyone should wish to call it (matrimony) a sacrament, we shall not object too highly against this. It should however be set apart from the previous two [*Baptism and the Lord's Supper*], which are properly [German: *eigentlich*: in a singular sense] signs and seals of the New Testament." (Par. 14.)

ONE MUST NOT ARGUE OVER THE NUMBER OF SACRAMENTS BEFORE AN AGREEMENT HAS BEEN REACHED CONCERNING THE TERM "SACRAMENT!" (Pieper.) This is a basic consideration, the importance of which Dr. Piepkorn hardly seems to realize.

Reluctantly passing over other theses in the work of Dr. Piepkorn under discussion, we must at least still comment on "34. *The celebrant at Holy Communion* is an ordained clergyman."

This is again thoroughly Roman Catholic. In our churches the congregation rightly sings, —

"The death of Jesus Christ, our Lord,
We celebrate with one accord."

(*Lutheran Hymnal*, No. 163.)

The pastor, who in liturgical parlance is properly referred to as the *minister* in the congregational service, *administers* Holy Communion. This is the way our Lutheran Confessions speak of this matter. Cp. e.g. the Formula of Concord, Thor. Decl., VII:24. (*Trigl.*, p. 979.) I Cor. 11, 26.24.25. Lk. 22, 19.

Other Errors of Dr. Piepkorn

Some of the errors discussed and a host of other errors and inaccuracies occur also in Dr. Piepkorn's *What the Symbolical Books of the Lutheran Church have to Say about Worship and the Sacraments*. (C.P.H., 1952.) Here we read such things as the following (p. 27:4): "The external visible elements of bread and wine are not to be adored in the Holy Sacrament (FC Ep. VII 40; but compare SD VII 126)." — At the place referred to in the Formula of Concord (*Trigl.*, p. 1015) our Lutheran Church repeats its rejection and condemnation of the teaching that the visible species of consecrated bread and wine are to be adored; and it contains no "but" that would condone anything to the contrary, no matter how specious the argumentation may be which underlies an attempt to justify such a practice. Our Reformation Fathers knew very well Rome's insistence that in view of its doctrine of Transubstantiation it adores not bread but the Body of Christ in the Sacrament; nevertheless, our Church labels its practice idolatry as do we. Yet Dr. Piepkorn endeavors to defend adoration at the elevation of the host by High Church Lutherans. In reply to criticism of this practice he says (*Una Sancta*, Holy Cross, 1947, p. 25): "Following the Rev. Mr. Norden away from the main issue for a moment, to comment on his statement, 'When communicants are disposed

to adore the Body and Blood of Christ in the Sacrament they are not following good Lutheran doctrine and practice,' it should be remembered that the only thing which the Confessions condemn is the adoration of the sacramental elements, bread and wine." Etc.

In connection with Holy Communion Dr. Piepkorn moreover offers the following *prayer for the souls of the dead* (patterned after that of the Roman Missal): "We also remember before Thee, O Lord, Thy servants and handmaidens, N. and N., who have gone before us with the Sign of Faith and are now fallen asleep. To them, O Lord, and to all that rest in Christ, we beseech Thee to grant Thy mercy and everlasting peace." (*Una Sancta*, Pentecost, 1947, p. 12.) In a faculty lecture on "The Significance of the Lutheran Symbols for Today," published in the June, 1954, *Seminarian*, Dr. Piepkorn specifically condemns the answer to Question 210 of Missouri's present *Short Explanation* of Luther's Small Catechism (which says we should not pray for the souls of the dead); faults our synodical fathers as having given us a Catechism "which is based on our traditional dogmatics rather than upon the Symbolical Books;" and assails the heritage of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (which is paying him for destroying its confession) as "a peculiarly ambivalent combination of Lutheran Orthodoxy and Lutheran Pietism." (P. 35.)

Basing its statements chiefly on *Una Sancta*, of which Dr. Piepkorn was then said to be the editor, the *St. Louis Register*, official publication of the St. Louis archdiocese of the Roman Catholic Church said (Aug. 18, 1950): "Many practices introduced by the so-called 'liturgical' movement in the Lutheran Church are definitely a return to the Catholic practices rejected by Luther or his successors. The doctrinal implications of many of these practices are even more startlingly a return to the Catholic belief." Of Dr. Piepkorn's prayer for the souls of the dead the *Register* said: "This memento for the dead is most startling to Catholics, well knowing the Protestant aversion to the doctrine of purgatory." And finally, the *Register* said: "Dr. Piepkorn caused a stir even outside American Lutheranism when he celebrated what to *Time* magazine was identical with a Catholic Mass, except that English was substituted for Latin. Dr. Piepkorn insists that there should be such a 'high mass' with a sermon every Sunday and 'major holy day.'"

Looking at the High Church Movement before us, and remembering Luther's example in his historic struggle against Rome, we are mindful of certain words of our Lord, — "This sort goeth not out but by prayer." (Mk. 9, 29.)

We have had our share of spiritual fasting. The fact has elsewhere been underlined that our present Presidium has failed us in that it has not been affording us that protection from error which we are supposed to enjoy under our synod's Constitution. It has been characteristic of our present Presidium that instead of prompt and distinct rejection of error (which is as much a requisite of evangelical discipline as is proper dealing with the erring) "suspensions of judgment" are being transmitted to posterity. (Preface to the Book of Concord, *Trigl.*, p. 23.) Indeed, public error on the part of Dr. Piepkorn e.g. has enjoyed express protection by the President of our synod. As a result, two things are happening today. 1) Error is constantly increasing at an ever accelerating rate within our dear church. 2) Errors of an ever more serious nature are constantly asserting themselves. It is quite apparent that, given another ten years of "leadership" like that of the last two decades, and there can hardly be any doubt but that our synod will have become quite completely engulfed by doctrinal indifference, and rank Modernism will have taken over where confessional orthodoxy once held sway, — except for the gracious intervention of God. God however works through human agencies. He expects and exhorts converted men to cooperate with Him, in a way, in their continued sanctification (the very essence of which always involves some sort of separation) by faithful use of the means of grace, and rejection of everything contrary to them. (Formula of Concord, Thorough Declaration, II:65; *Trigl.*, p. 907.) Our synodical officials are our servants, not our overlords. It is our right and duty to tell them that as they act in our behalf we expect them to do the right thing and not the wrong. But this we must do. As we do some real praying, the genuineness of which is shown by our backing it up by our actions, let us remember the words of our Lord, "If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place; and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you." Our Church need not go down the drain like others before it *if only we quit ourselves like men and stand up for it in the fear of the Lord.* On the

other hand, the Missouri Synod has no divine promise of special, extraordinary grace, — no promise but such as is common to others.

"Almighty God, our Heavenly father, whose property it is always to have mercy, we most earnestly beseech Thee to visit with Thy Fatherly correction all such as have erred and gone astray from the truth of Thy holy Word, and to bring them to a due sense of their error, that they may again with hearty faith receive and hold fast Thine unchangeable truth; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen." (Liturgy.)

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ON THE UNION FRONT

Missouri and the LWF.

According to the financial report in *The Lutheran Witness*, April 22, 1958, p. 17, the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod spent \$5,093.78 to send its "official observers" to the Assembly of the Lutheran World Federation held in Minneapolis in 1957.

Continuing with a brief analysis of *The Lutheran Witness's* offerings to Missouri Synod readers on the subject of the LWF, we find a few items containing criticisms of the LWF, such as those of President Dr. J. W. Behnken, in the issues of August 27, 1957, p. 15 and December 3, 1957, pp. 15. 18. In the former issue the point is made that the LWF does the work of a church body, while claiming to be a mere federation. In the latter issue the point is made that membership in the LWF would cause the Missouri Synod to compromise her "confessional principles."

But *The Lutheran Witness* of Sept. 24, 1957 devoted about six pages to various reports and comments on the LWF Assembly at Minneapolis, most of it leaving an impression quite favorable. Laymen were asking whether Missouri is getting ready to join up, or is changing its mind about the whole thing.

Dr. J. W. Behnken addressed a letter, on Jan. 31, 1958, accompanying a "discussion outline" on the LWF. The letter and the outline went out to all pastors. A paragraph of this letter reads:

"Undoubtedly the entire question re the Lutheran World Federation needs thorough study. This must be done not merely by the Committee on Doctrinal Unity, nor merely by officials of Synod, nor merely by our theological faculties, but also by every pastor and professor and teacher of Synod. In fact, it should be done by all our congregations. Everyone must be thoroughly convinced that his position is in accord with Scripture."

What will the application of these principles do to the Missouri Synod in its present divided condition on the subject of church fellowship? Since the Agreement of the Praesidium of the Missouri Synod in 1946 with the signers of "A Statement," Missouri's house has been divided.

Those of Statementarian mind already regard the LWF people as brothers in the faith, in every sense of the word. Supposing now this proposed survey of convictions showed the synodical membership split down the middle on the LWF issue, each group "thoroughly convinced that his position is in accord with Scripture." Is this what Missouri's leadership wants? We hardly suppose so. Or, will they be satisfied with a compromise such as the *status quo*, cooperating in certain endeavors of the LWF (and its American sector, the National Lutheran Council) without actually joining the organization? In this way many hope that the Missouri Synod can go on without facing and settling the issue. In the field of medicine we know better, that sewing a new patch of skin over the old festering boils is an act of quackery.

The Right Remedy

Well, is Scripture silent on the issue? Is the problem so obscure that God's solution is not apparent?

Strikingly, the most applicable Scripture passage in the case, Rom. 16, 17-18, is not brought into the discussion by Missouri officialdom. Do they not realize that without the application of the applicable Scripture, the case against the LWF is lost?

A discussion outline: Rom. 16, 17 tells us to "mark them which cause divisions and offenses contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned." It speaks of things which we can see and hear. We note such things "contrary" to the doctrine, also fundamental doctrine, in the LWF. In Rom. 16, 18 God tells us what He thinks. He *reveals* this to us, lest we be deceived by our emotions. He says of all those described in v. 17: "They that are such serve not our Lord

Jesus Christ, but their own belly; and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple." If God says this, it must be true. And when He says in v. 17, "Avoid them," we ought not to join them.

Missouri's continuing debate and resultant division can be stopped by the application of God's Word.

Physician, Heal Thyself!

It is urgent, we are informed, that the Missouri Synod send its theologians to meetings of LWF theologians, in order to straighten out the latter. At the close of a synodical pastoral conference, a pastor asked the lecturer, a St. Louis Seminary professor: "Have we not errorists in our own midst who should be dealt with before we go into LWF circles to correct them?" Answer: "Yes, we have our errorists, but. . . ."

Judging from what appears in the reading matter, both official and unofficial, within the Missouri Synod, it must be concluded that the laity, including delegates to future synodical conventions, has been offered much "news" about the LWF, but very little about its doctrinal status and its true nature.

Missouri is in for more LWF — trouble.

A Declaration of Paramount Significance

To understand the aims which the leadership of the Lutheran World Federation, and its American sector, the National Lutheran Council, have in their dealings with the Missouri Synod, it is imperative that we take cognizance of an article in *The National Lutheran*, organ of the National Lutheran Council (March-April, 1958, pp. 5-7). There Dr. Paul C. Empie, NLC Executive Director, writes on the topic, "A New Look at Lutheran Cooperation."

Sights Toward Missouri

The introductory caption at the head of the article reads: "Dr. Empie's suggestion to call a general conference for restudy of Lutheran cooperation in the atomic age was a main subject of discussion at the National Lutheran Council's 40th annual meeting in Atlantic City, N. J., February 4-7.

"The Council voted to request approval of the eight cooperating church bodies for an exploratory meeting of the NLC Executive Committee with representatives of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod and other Lutheran bodies in the USA 'in order to examine present cooperative activities in American Lutheranism and the possibility for extension of such activities.'"

So, in Dr. Empie's article, we may look for the viewpoints with which NLC leadership and people may be expected to confront Missouri Synod leadership and people. And we find these viewpoints stated.

Degree of Unity

Dr. Empie raises the question: "Are We Parading the 'Scandal' of Christian Disunity?"

Two paragraphs under this heading are of special interest:

"Lutherans have been leaders in holding to the view that unity with subsequent close relationships based upon less than agreement as to the essential truths regarding the Word and Sacraments is meaningless and in fact is a betrayal of the Gospel. This, however, is to point only to the negative side of the issue. How should it be declared affirmatively?"

"By stating that in loyalty to the Gospel, a church must *make every effort to arrive at agreement* with other Christian groups as to the essential truths regarding the Word and Sacraments, and *during the process*, must manifest at every possible place *the degree of unity which does exist*." (P. 5; emphases in original.)

There it is again. That "degree of unity" business. If you find doctrinal differences, you side-track them a while (and this gets to be a long time) until you have discovered a "degree of unity" which exists, and then you practice fellowship to a degree that you think is equivalent. (Signers of "A Statement" in the Missouri Synod have come forward with that thought also.) But the Bible and the Lutheran Confessions assert that "no room" should be given to "the least error."

Still on the subject of the "scandal of Christian disunity," Dr. Empie writes:

"It is obvious that there can be only one true doctrine of the Gospel, and that the differences which separate Christians are caused by the limitations or distortions of human judgments which enter into the confessions of various groups.

"There is a 'scandal' in this situation by the extent to which a group equates its own thinking to that of God, unwilling to concede the possibility that it can be persuaded to recognize any human error in its position without thereby 'compromising its faith!'" (P. 6.)

Can't you imagine what will go on in the proposed meetings? "See, Missouri," the colloquents of the NLC will say, voices brim-

ming with piety, "we are all subject to the distortions and limitations of human judgment. Surely there is the possibility that there is some error in your time-honored doctrinal position. We'll admit being in some error, if you will be a good sport and admit some too." So it goes. Jesus said: "If ye continue in my Word . . . ye shall know the truth." But Satan said: "Yea, hath God said?" At such a point it will be time for the Missourians to read, to all assembled, long sections of Dr. Theodore Engelder's *The Scripture Cannot be Broken*, or at least of *Popular Symbolics*, pp. 13-18.

"Improved Relationship" Is Their Fundamental Principle.

Dr. Empie continues: "Since Christ unites all whom He frees, all Christians are related to Him and must be restlessly seeking each other, eager to let His Word triumph over human error. The sin of arrogance and pride at this point is surely a major factor in preventing the Christian Church at this moment of history from proclaiming prophetically and powerfully to the nations: 'Thus saith the Lord.'

"The history of the National Lutheran Council is in a sense merely the record of developing acceptance of each other by Lutheran groups in America, resulting in increasing cooperative relationships over a forty-year period. . . .

"The theological positions of the Lutheran churches in America today are substantially the same as they were in 1918, but, God be thanked, their relationships are vastly improved." (P. 6.)

Read that last paragraph again. The *doctrinal positions* of all the bodies within the NLC are "substantially the same" as they were in 1918. The doctrinal differences, too, are still standing on the side-track. They may be there another forty years. And that is supposed to be letting "His Word triumph over error."

More History

Another section of Dr. Empie's article reads: ". . . A new Constitution was drawn up and approved, effective in 1945."

"Added to the Council's responsibilities at that time were those in the fields of Student Service and American Missions; previous activities were reorganized into Divisions of Public Relations and of Welfare. A little later, a Bureau of Service to Military Personnel was added, followed by a

Commission on Younger Churches and Orphaned Missions, a Lutheran Resettlement Service, a European Desk, and a Division of Lutheran Cooperation in Latin America.

"Subsequent reorganization, following the designation of the Council as the U.S.A. National Committee of the Lutheran World Federation, combined some of the above activities with added responsibilities in a Division of Lutheran World Federation Affairs.

"The budget of the Council soared from \$30,000 in 1938, to \$1,450,000 in 1958 (not including Lutheran World Action grants to the LWF and other international agencies), and the staff likewise increased from 7 to 150 in the same period." (P. 7.)

A Little Arithmetic.

Now let all Missourians take paper and pencil in hand and figure out what their share will be, if Dr. Empie's hopes are realized, as he expresses them in his final paragraph:

"It might be wise to convene a Lutheran conference in 1959, as a first step in facing the practical problems confronting us in the third era of the Council's history, and it would seem desirable to invite representatives of Lutheran bodies not now participating in the Council to take part in discussions of an agenda for this proposed conference, thus opening the door to the possibility of their participation in the conference itself."

Come into my parlor, said the spider. . . .

A. V. K.

What Love To God Will Do for You

"Nothing makes a man more sensitive to evil than a hearty love to God." — Alexander Maclaren, *Expositions of Holy Scripture*, Philipians, p. 208.

The Abolition of Christ's Threefold Office by the Pope

The pope abolishes the *prophetic* office of Christ through his traditions; the *royal* office, through the power which he arrogates to himself; the *highpriestly* office, through the sacrifices which he has administered through his priests.

— Spannheim, cited in Hoenecke's Dogmatics, IV, 222.

What Our Readers Say

"It is comforting to know that there is a group which holds fast to the fundamentals our founding fathers spent their time and energy to preserve. — These sure are times to try men's souls. How much we need to watch and pray more. The 46th Psalm comes to my mind so often. — I shall subscribe to the *Confessional Lutheran*. — Thank you again for taking the time to satisfy my yearning for light on what's going on in Synodical circles. — Layman, New York.

"We do need consecrated men to 'stand in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein' — to stand in the gap and announce the ways of the Lord and His Word. Brethren, you are doing a good work. Keep up with the help of God!" — Pastor, Ohio.

"May God bless the straightforward testimony of the *Confessional Lutheran*!" — Pastor, Nebraska.

"I have gotten a lot out of the past years' issues of the *Confessional Lutheran*. It is heartening to be able to read such clear articles on what is becoming a more confused problem every day." — Pastor, Wisconsin.

I am thankful to God for the *Confessional Lutheran*. It is a wonderful publication, and I wish that all Lutherans would read it as much as I do. . . . May God bless you in your important work. Don't ever become discouraged." — Mrs. B., St. Paul, Minn.

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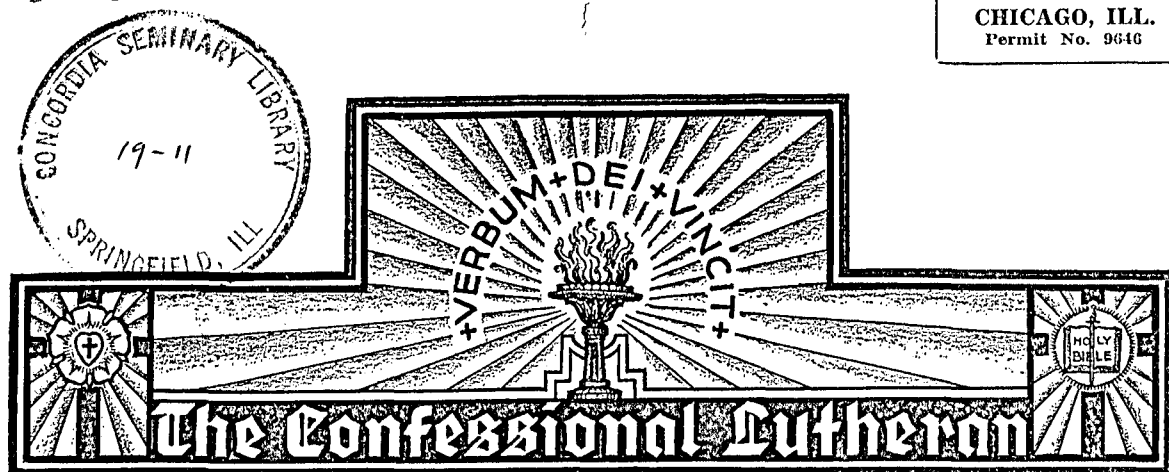
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MOTTO: *Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you: but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment.* — 1 Cor. 1, 10.

"We have no intention of yielding ought of the eternal, immutable truth of God for the sake of temporal peace, tranquility, and unity (which, moreover, is not in our power to do). Nor would such peace and unity, since it is devised against the truth and for its suppression, have any permanency. Still less are we inclined to adorn and conceal a corruption of the pure doctrine and manifest, condemned errors. But we entertain heartfelt pleasure and love for, and are on our part sincerely inclined and anxious to advance, that unity according to our utmost power, by which His glory remains to God uninjured, nothing of the divine truth of the Holy Gospel is surrendered, no room is given to the least error, poor sinners are brought to true, genuine repentance, raised up by faith, confirmed in new obedience, and thus justified and eternally saved alone through the sole merit of Christ." — Concluding Statement of the Formula of Concord concerning the Requirements of Confessional Fellowship among Lutherans of the Augsburg Confession. Trigl. Conc., p. 1095.

"It has been our purpose . . . that all unlawful, doubtful, suspicious, and condemned doctrines, wherever and in whatever books they may be found, and whoever may have written them, or even now may be disposed to defend them, might be exposed, distinctly repudiated, so that every one may be faithfully warned against the errors, which are spread here and there in the writings of some theologians, and no one be misled in this matter by the reputation (authority) of any man." — Formula of Concord (Thorough Declaration), Comprehensive Summary; Trigl. Conc., P. 857.

"These highly important matters (the business of religion) concern also the common people and laymen (as they are called), who, inasmuch as they are Christians, must for their salvation distinguish between pure and false doctrine." — Formula of Concord (Thorough Declaration), Comprehensive Summary; Trigl. Conc., P. 853.

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IN THIS ISSUE: Tragic — Denying the Resurrection of "the flesh" and of "All" the Dead — Denying the Immortality of the Soul — Denying that the Old Testament Clearly Teaches the Resurrection of the Dead — The Faculty-Approved Thesis on Christ's Descent into Hell — What Our Readers Say.

● **Tragic**

It is tragic indeed how one article after the other of the Apostles' Creed is being either misinterpreted or explained away in St. Louis. In a later article we will point out how "communion of saints" is now being interpreted by a St. Louis professor in the sense in which it is explained in the Roman Catechism published by decree of the Council of Trent. A number of years ago a B.D. thesis was approved by official St. Louis Faculty representatives which, while treating the "Scriptural Basis of the Doctrine of Christ's Descent

into Hell," denies that the doctrine had a Scriptural basis and contended that the doctrine appeared only after Apostolic times and arose in heathen mythology. To this day the approval of that thesis at Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, has not been repudiated and the thesis is being defended in certain official circles. Now a St. Louis professor questions the resurrection of the "flesh," which the Christian Church has from the very beginning confessed over against Marcion and other heretics.

Since the denial of the truth of Scripture, unless effective measures are taken to coun-

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"As soon as we look more to our synod than to the invisible kingdom of God, the kingdom of grace and salvation, we begin to be a sect. For this is really the essence of sectarianism that one has his eye on his little fellowship above all, even though the kingdom of God may suffer harm thereby." "That preacher is no true preacher who merely seeks to fanaticize his congregation for the Lutheran Church, or for the Missouri Synod, or, worse still, only for the Iowa District. Such men are bad preachers. They must rather direct people to Christ and say: See, we preach the pure Word of God, in which the everlasting Gospel of Christ is continued; that is why you should adhere to us, and therefore we say, Leave us as soon as we no longer do this! For salvation by no means depends on us, nor also on the Missouri Synod. So if it no longer preaches the pure Word of God, then it is worthy of nothing but that one forsake it." — Dr. C. F. W. Walther, "Concerning the Chief Obligations Which a Synod Has if it Rightly Wants to Bear the Name of an Evangelical Lutheran Synod." Doctrinal Essay at the First Convention of the Iowa District of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, 1879; Proceedings, pp. 112. 114.

teract such denial, is always progressive, one cannot but wonder whether other articles of the Apostles' Creed will be challenged in St. Louis in coming days. In church bodies where error has been allowed to pursue its course we see even denial of the virgin birth of Christ and of His deity asserted and allowed to stand. That is the natural end of such toleration.

D.

Denying the Resurrection of "The Flesh" and of "All" the Dead

In a paper, entitled "The Resurrection of the Body and the Immortality of the Soul," read at a meeting of the Presidium of the Missouri Synod and the Faculty Senate of Concordia Seminary in St. Louis on May 1, 1958, Dr. G. Thiele said:

"The phrase 'resurrectio carnis' or 'anastasis sarkos' (resurrection of the flesh) is not New Testamental. Among whatever gains there are in our own Church in the transition, and there are also some disadvantages to be scored, from the German to the American language, this is certainly a great gain, that the majority of our people no longer say 'Auferstehung des Fleisches' but 'the resurrection of the body.' Actually the resurrection of the 'flesh,' to my knowledge, has never been used in the English confession of the Creeds. It has always been either, in the Apostles' Creed, 'of the body,' or in the Nicene Creed 'The resurrection of the dead.'" (p. 26f.)

The Apostles' Creed

The expression "resurrection of the body" first appeared in the King's Book of 1543. Before that, in the so-called Bishops' Book of 1537, the article read: "I believe that at doomsday all the people of the world that ever was or ever shall be unto that day shall then arise in the selfsame flesh and body which they had while they lived on earth." In the second prayer book of Edward VI (1552) in the order for morning prayer, the article reads "the resurrection of the body," but in the order of baptism it retains the original form "the resurrection of the flesh." (Mc Giffert, *Apostles' Creed*, p. 169, footnote.)

The Lutheran Church confesses the "carnis resurrectionem" (resurrection of the flesh) in the Book of Concord (cf. *Triglotta*, p. 30); and that has always been the form of this article in the Apostles' Creed from the very beginning, except in the Creed of Rufinus (400 A.D.), where the phrase read "the

resurrection of *this* flesh" — the sign of the cross being made on the forehead when saying the word "this." The Creed of Cyril of Jerusalem (348) and the Creed of Marcellus (340) have "*sarkos anastasin*" (resurrection of the flesh) and in the Creed of Niceta of Remesia (370-375) it is "*carnis* resurrectionem." That undoubtedly is also how the article read in the so-called Roman Symbol which can be clearly traced back to the end of the second century. Tertullian of that day tells us that "resurrection of the flesh" was part of the "Rule of Faith" (de virg. vel. i; adv. praesc. Haer. 13, 36) and that Marcion and other heretics denied the "resurrection of the flesh" (adv. Marc. V, 19; de resur. carn. xviii). There can be little doubt that *carnis* resurrectionem was added to the Creed to emphasize the resurrection of *the flesh* over against its current denial.

The Resurrection of Christ's Flesh

Tertullian rightly says that "if the resurrection of the flesh be denied, that prime article of faith," namely, the person and flesh of Christ, "is shaken." (de resur. carn. ii.) Dr. Thiele says: "The over-all New Testament word for that which dies and is dead is *sarx* . . . the *sarx* is never to be resurrected, rather to be put off permanently." (P. 12.) And as to the resurrection of Christ he says, "It is clear that this was not the resurrection of 'the flesh,' but of the body." (P. 18.)

In his sermon on Pentecost Day, Peter says that David spoke of the resurrection of Christ "that his soul was not left in hell, neither his *flesh* did see corruption," Acts 2:31. If Christ's flesh, his "*sarx*," did not see corruption, then it could not have been "put off permanently." Then the *flesh* of Christ must have been resurrected. Over against Marcion who also denied the resurrection of Christ's flesh, Tertullian rightly said that Christ truly lived and died in *human flesh* and "after the resurrection, when showing His hands and His feet for the disciples to examine, he said, Behold and see that it is I myself, for a spirit hath not *flesh* and bones, as ye see me have; without doubt, hands, and feet, and bones are not what a spirit possesses but *only the flesh*." (de carn. Chr. v.)

Dr. Thiele continues: "If it were, indeed, the flesh, exactly and only as it had died, it would not only have the wounds, the features, of the dead Christ, brought to life, but would be subject to another death, as were Jairus' daughter and Lazarus, and the anonymous Nainite. Besides, the limitations particularly

of space would still be operative also for Him. That this is not the case is surely clear." (P. 18.)

That "the wounds, the features, of the dead Christ" were actually brought to life is clearly seen from the fact that Thomas insisted on seeing in Christ's hands the print of the nails and putting his fingers into the print of the nails. When Jesus did appear again He told Thomas, "Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands; and reach hither thy hand and thrust it into my side," John 20:27.

How anyone in the face of such clear passages as Acts 3:21, Luke 24:39, John 20:27, can deny that Christ's resurrection was not "of the flesh" is simply inconceivable. And when Dr. Thiele contends that in that case Christ would be "subject to another death" and that "the limitations particularly of space would still be operative for Him," he completely ignores the difference between Christ's state of humiliation and His state of exaltation or glorification. Indeed, were the "limitations of space" *always* operative for Christ, even in the state of humiliation?

The Resurrection "of the Flesh" in General

Dr. Thiele says: "The *sarx* is never to be resurrected, rather to be put off permanently." (P. 12.)

As to proof that Scripture when speaking of the resurrection of the body means the resurrection "of the flesh," we would direct our readers' attention to Tertullian's extensive treatise "On the Resurrection of the Flesh" and his "Five Books Against Marcion." There Tertullian refutes not only Marcion's denial but also Dr. Thiele's denial of the resurrection "of the flesh." But here we would note this difference: Dr. Thiele's paper is marked by a great dearth of Scripture passages, and when it does refer to Scripture it usually refers to Scripture merely to try to refute what has been generally held and confessed in our circles. Tertullian, on the other hand, over against the contentions and vagaries of the philosophers, of Marcion, and of other heretics of his day, does not philosophize or rationalize but *he cites Scripture* — and that more than any other Christian theologian of that day.

We shall not go into detail. On Rom. 8:11, "He shall also quicken your *mortal* bodies," he says: "In these words he both affirmed the resurrection of the flesh (without which nothing can rightly be called body, nor can anything be properly regarded as mortal)." (adv. Marc. V, xiv.) On John 5:28, 29, "all that are *in the graves* shall come forth," he says: "None

will after such words be able to interpret the dead 'that are in the graves' as any other than the bodies of the flesh, because the graves themselves are nothing but the resting-places of corpses." (de resur. carn. xxxvii.) On Phil. 3:21, "who shall change our *vile* body," he says: "If you maintain that a transfiguration and a conversion amounts to the annihilation of any substance, then it follows . . . that Satan himself, when 'transformed into an angel of light,' loses his own proper character. Such is not my opinion. So likewise changes, conversions, and reformations will necessarily take place to bring about the resurrection but the substance of the flesh will be preserved safe." (de resur. carn. lv.) And of such passages as Rom. 8:8, 18; Gal. 5:17, he says: "In these and similar assertions which he makes, it is not the substance of the flesh, but its actions, which are censured." (de resur. carn. x.)

A Resurrection "of the Body"

Dr. Thiele teaches "a resurrection of the bodies of the dead, even as the resurrection of Jesus was the resurrection of the dead body of Jesus." (P. 27.) "Will there be some sort of mass peregrination to the throne of God, out of the depths of the sea, out of the innumerable graves, catacombs, crypts, urns, and other places of disposal? Is this not too fanciful to bother us, really? We will be before the throne of God and of the Lamb." (P. 28.)

We wonder what Dr. Thiele actually believes regarding John 5:28, 29, where it is expressly said that "all that are *in the graves* shall hear His voice, and *shall come forth*." Here a "mass peregrination out of the innumerable graves" is expressly taught by Christ.

Dr. Thiele contends that man's body "is inhabited in the new man by the pneuma (spirit). He becomes, in other words, a pneumatic person, a spiritual body that is the temple of the Pneuma Hagion (Holy Spirit)." (P. 12.) And speaking of the "Pneuma period," the time *after* Jesus walked among men, he says: "It is the time of faith, of expectation, of waiting and of work. We live in it too. Faith is henceforth regarded as a creative act of the Spirit of the living God, very decidedly spelled out, and by this faith we live in the Spirit, NOT IN THE FLESH. We live in the body, and this body has become the temple of the Holy Ghost." (P. 20.)

St. Paul says of "them which are in Christ Jesus" that they "walk not *after the flesh*,

but according to the Spirit," Rom. 8:1, 4, that is, they do not gratify the corrupt desires and passions of the flesh. What it means to walk after the flesh may be seen from Gal. 5:19. But St. Paul says of himself, "the life I *now live in the flesh* I live in the faith of the Son of God," Gal. 2:20. Dr. Thiele completely ignores the fact that Scripture uses the word "flesh" in a twofold sense: as the carnal, unspiritual life; and as flesh and blood or as flesh and bones. And he especially denies the resurrection of the latter. That, according to Dr. Thiele, is never to be resurrected but put off permanently.

Dr. Thiele finally summarizes his whole concept of the resurrection of the body in these words: "The believer, the child of God, is incorporated in and with Jesus Christ. His body, i.e., He is our head, and we are members of that Head, being His body. . . . Now, the Body of Christ arose from the dead. The Church is also called 'His Body.' Becoming a believer, a member of the Body of Christ, means therefore that the believer is thus a participant in the Resurrection. *What the resurrection on the day of resurrection means, therefore, is that all who have been joined to the Risen Christ by being members of His Body will be participants in the resurrection that has to be the inevitable sequel to the resurrection of Jesus Christ.*" (P. 29f. Our emphasis.)

Could there be a clearer denial of the simple Catechism truth that God will on the Last Day raise up me and *all the dead*?

The Resurrection and the Sacraments

We note that in the "Selected Introductory Bibliography" for his paper, Dr. Thiele lists also "On the Soul and Resurrection" by Gregory of Nyssa. Gregory of Nyssa and his older brother Basil of Caesarea and their friend Gregory Nazianzen were the last of the Greek Fathers and fully developed the idea that through reception of the Body of Christ in the Eucharist we are united with Christ and thus our bodies share in His resurrection.

Referring to the position which the resurrection "occupies in the teaching of the Sacraments," Dr. Thiele cites Irenaeus that "our bodies have received the unity which brings us immortality by means of the washing of Baptism" and that "our bodies, after partaking of the Eucharist are no longer corruptible, having the hope of eternal resurrection." But Dr. Thiele fails to mention that immediately preceding the last words cited by him Irenaeus asks: "How can they (the

Gnostic heretics) say that the flesh, which is nourished with the body of the Lord and with His blood, goes to corruption, and does not partake of life?" (adv. Haer. IV, 18, 5.) Irenaeus agreed with Tertullian and others of his day in confessing a resurrection of the flesh. Irenaeus originally came from the East where the Eucharist as a "medicine of immortality" was first enunciated by Ignatius of Antioch, but in Irenaeus the idea is still being developed. It is of course part and parcel of sacramentalism which is the heart of the whole modern Liturgical *Una Sancta* movement.

Why did the Presidium of the Missouri Synod and the Faculty Senate of Concordia Seminary in St. Louis not rise as one man and demand a public retraction of this obvious denial of the resurrection of all the dead on the Last Day?

How deeply has Romanism and Modernism actually penetrated our church body?

D.

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❶ Denying the Immortality of the Soul

In the paper to which we have referred in a previous article Dr. Thiele clearly denies the immortality of the soul, when he says: "When we so speak: You have an immortal soul . . . and when we die, our soul(s) go to God and to heaven. Is that not comforting?—When we so speak, we are speaking by adaptation the language of Plato . . . of the worst of all early Church heresies, Gnosticism. . . ." "The Bible in its length and breadth knows of no disembodied condition in which man lives, temporarily, and certainly not permanently, knows, therefore neither a temporary or permanent human immortality as such." (P. 10f.) "The sarx (flesh) is never to be resurrected, rather to be put off permanently, and so the nephesh (soul) has a similar fate." (P. 12.)

After stating that some philosophers hold that at death "all things come to an end" and that others "declare the soul to be immortal," Tertullian says that "nearly all the heretics"—Marcion and the Gnostics who claimed to be Christians—"refrain" from denying the

immortality of the soul, except a "certain Lucan," who "substitutes some third nature which is to rise again, neither soul nor flesh." (de resur. carn. ii.) Tertullian points to Matt. 10:28 and says: "Here we have a recognition of the natural immortality of the soul, which cannot be killed by men; and of the mortality of the body, which may be killed." (ibid. xxxv.) Dr. Cullmann, who is more or less Dr. Thiele's teacher in this whole matter, says "the soul can be killed. The soul is not immortal." (*Christianity Today*, 1958, July 21, p. 22.) Matt. 10:28 clearly states that men can "kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul." Since men cannot kill the soul, the soul must be immortal. However, Jesus adds that we should fear Him who is able "to destroy both body and soul in hell." Does such "destruction" of both body and soul *in hell* mean that both body and soul will be annihilated, as the Jehovah Witnesses contend? Hardly. From the parallel passage, Luke 12:5, it is evident that we should fear Him "who has authority to cast into hell" and according to 2 Thess. 1:9, they who obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ shall suffer as *punishment* "everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord."

Does Dr. Thiele hold and believe that the unbelievers will be annihilated? As we have pointed out in a previous article, he clearly denies the resurrection of *all the dead*.

Contrary to the clear statement, "Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and the spirit shall return to God who gave it," Eccl. 12:7, Dr. Thiele insists "Man is a unit. . . . You cannot slice him up and have this part of him going there and another there and perhaps a third or fourth going there. Regenerate or unregenerate, he is man one and entire, with or without Christ." (P. 13.) Accordingly, Dr. Thiele denies also an "intermediate state" between the death of an individual and the resurrection of that individual on the Last Day. He says: "It is obvious that in the endless time in which God lives there is no such thing as an intermediate state. We arrive at this problem and at the term when we look at things, and how else can we look at them, from man's viewpoint. We would like to know, in short, 'Where are our dead?' . . . We suggest that it is comforting, and as full a statement of where and how the dead are to say: They are with God. Obviously they are not with God as total people, for their bodies are here. And since their 'soul' is not they, they cannot possibly be with God or Christ as they will be after the resurrection." (P. 25.)

But in a "Special Notice" found in the May, 1958, *Seminarian*, Dr. Thiele says: "The author of the article affirms his conviction that an existence survives temporal death, and that Christians at their departure are immediately with Christ." (cf. *Conf. Luth.*, 1958, p. 90.) It has been contended that in the *Seminarian* notice we have a "retraction," for otherwise the author would be in hopeless contradiction with himself. That, however, is by no means true.

According to Dr. Thiele "the sarx (flesh) is never to be resurrected, rather to be put off permanently, and so the nephesh (soul) has a similar fate. Bios (earthly life) never returns. But by virtue of the Pneuma (Spirit) a new life, called Zoe (spiritual life), enters man, enters his soma (body), and behold, he is a new man. He is still 'of the flesh,' but even now he is in the process of putting that off, so that his soma (body), inhabited by the pneuma (spirit), has zoe (spiritual life)." (P. 12f. We have inserted the words in parenthesis.) According to Dr. Thiele it is of course the *body* of the dead with its "spirit" and its "spiritual life" which will be raised on the Last Day. The "flesh" with its "soul" and "earthly life" will never be resurrected. (Cf. p. 27.)

But how can Dr. Thiele say that "man is a unit. . . . You cannot slice him up and have this part of him going there and another there," and say that the dead "are not with God as total people, for their bodies are here," and then finally say that "Christians at their departure are immediately with Christ"? How can these three seemingly contradictory statements be reconciled? That can easily be done by philosophical speculation regarding time from the standpoint of God, according to which Dr. Thiele says, "that in the endless time in which God lives there is no such thing as an intermediate state." Such philosophical speculation about time from the view point of God is found already in the B.D. thesis on Christ's Descent into Hell, approved by the St. Louis Faculty in 1943. In that thesis, p. 24ff, a B.D. thesis by Dean R. Jesse, on "The Trichotomy According to Scripture" is extensively quoted. There Dean Jesse is quoted as saying: "A sequence of events is an impossibility in a timeless world. It (the spirit) is therefore already joined again to its body, for Resurrection Day is *already upon it at the instant of its departure* from the world of time to that which is timeless. More properly, and strictly, speaking, there is, from the timeless point of view of the spirit, no separa-

tion of itself from the body at all, for the sequence of events represented by disjunction and reunion cannot exist simultaneously, and if not simultaneously, then not at all." ("The History and Scriptural Basis of the Doctrine of Christ's Descent into Hell," Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, 1943, p. 27.)

Thus with this philosophical gobble-de-gook, faculty-approved in St. Louis in 1943, one can say without contradicting oneself that the dead are *not with God* and that they *are with Christ*.

To this we would add that the first of "suggested topics for further study in the areas touched upon in the paper" by Dr. Thiele is—"Descent into Hell." (P. 34.) Surprised?

Is all this perhaps another reason why certain official circles continue to defend and uphold the B.D. Thesis of 1943 on Christ's Descent into Hell, approved by the St. Louis Faculty, and why they did not demand an immediate retraction and repudiation of Dr. Thiele's "The Resurrection of the Body and the Immortality of the Soul" before permitting him to remain as professor at our St. Louis Seminary, teaching the future pastors of our congregations?

D.

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❶ Denying That the Old Testament Clearly Teaches the Resurrection of the Dead

Speaking of "Death, the Old Testament View," Dr. Thiele says: "Death furthermore, is final. This is the most gloomy of all aspects of death—it is the end. When you die, 'you've had it.' There is 'no remembrance'—of God, of yourself, the few passages that seem to indicate a measure of hope notwithstanding. . . . The almost common consent of Old Testament scholars today, is that the immortality of the soul or person and the resurrection were, alike, not known or, at least, certainly not current or important. . . . At most, we can say that what there is in the Old Testament of a belief in personal survival is very un-Greek, and also very inarticulate." (P. 7.) "The fact that our Lord can make a staggering inference regarding the continued life of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob and use the Jonah

story in reference to His resurrection in no way indicates that the patriarchs thought of the living God as a god of the continuously living, or that the rebellious castor-plant user could envision the miracle of Easter. The valley of the bones in Ezekiel, Job's ejaculations in chapter 19, isolated verses in Isaiah and Daniel, by their very lack of precision and by their isolation, are but further evidence that anything like a New Testament eschatology was unknown. That is not to say that the Old Testament believer was without hope. He commended and committed himself to God as Judge and Lord, but he was not in possession of anything but rather vague conceptions of what it all meant, except that he had the conviction that God knew best. Death, then, to all intent and purpose, for the Old Testament believer, was in that way final, that what lay beyond, however much or little was known to him about it, in no way alleviated for him its terminal character as judgment and inexorable arrival." (P. 8.) Of Job 19:26 Dr. Thiele says: "The Job passage in all probability does not refer to resurrection or even to immortality" and of Psalm 73:23-26 he says the poet "looks for eventual change here, and not at some time after death." (P. 11.)

Dr. Thiele refers to the "modern, more or less orthodox Jewish view" and says that his rabbi acquaintance made little, if any, mention of a life after death or a resurrection. He also makes mention of a reformed rabbi to whom death was extinction, even annihilation.

That the Jews at the time of Christ and before Christ believed in a resurrection is expressly stated, Acts 23:8, "the Sadducees say that there is no resurrection, neither angel, nor spirit: but the Pharisees confess both." Edersheim, *Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah*, Vol. II, p. 399, says: "All the more, that it was so keenly controverted by heathen, Sadducees, and heretics, as appears from many reports in the Talmud, and that it was so encumbered with realistic legends, should we admire the tenacity with which the Pharisees clung to this doctrine. The hope of the Resurrection-world appears in almost every religious utterance of Israel. It is the spring-bud on the tree, stript by the long winter of disappointment and persecution. This hope pours its morning carol into the prayer which every Jew is bound to say on awakening; it sheds its warm breath over the oldest daily prayers which date from before the time of our Lord; in the formula 'from age to age,' 'world without end,' it forms, so to speak, the rearguard to every prayer, de-

fending it from Sadducean assault; it is one of the few dogmas denial of which involves, according to the Mishnah, the loss of eternal life, the Talmud explaining—almost in the words of Christ—that in the retribution of God this is only 'measure according to measure;' nay, it is venerable even in its exaggeration, that only our ignorance fails to perceive it in every section of the Bible, and to hear it in every commandment of the Law."

As proof that the Jews believed in a resurrection from the dead we could cite only 2 Macc. 12:43-46, which speaks of Judas collecting two thousand drachms of silver and sending it to Jerusalem to offer a sin-offering for the slain, "in that he was mindful of the resurrection. For if he had not hoped that they that were slain should have risen again, it had been superfluous and vain to pray for the dead. . . . Whereupon he made reconciliation for the dead, that they might be delivered from sin."

In his "Select Introductory Bibliography" Dr. Thiele lists various articles and books of the last decades, especially the works of Dr. Oscar Cullmann, Dean of the Theological Faculty of the University of Basel, the university where Dr. Thiele received his doctor's degree in 1954. Dr. Cullmann's position is stated in *Christianity Today*, 1958, July 21, "Immortality or Resurrection." Dr. Thiele's suggested bibliography lists mostly modernistic material. For instance, he lists *Resurrectio Carnis* in *Augustana Quarterly*, 1944, April, pp. 110-126, by Dr. C. J. Soedergren, former professor of Augustana Theological Seminary, in which the resurrection is questioned. But he does not list "I Believe in the Resurrection of the Body" by W. F. Beck in *C.T.M.*, 1945, March, pp. 153-169, which reviews Dr. Soedergren's article and vindicates the Scriptural doctrine. And why was the synodical essay by Dr. C. M. Zorn at the Central District in 1886 on "I Believe in the Resurrection of the Flesh" completely ignored? Is that perhaps because this essay completely ignores the rationalism of modern theologians and is the *Scriptural* answer to Dr. Thiele's rationalism and shows among other things that the Old Testament did clearly teach a resurrection of the dead?

How much are close contacts and meetings with certain Lutheran theologians in Germany responsible for the vagaries of this paper by a Seminary professor? Is the rationalism of German theology now taking over the podium at Concordia Seminary where formerly theological giants like Walther, Stoeckhardt, Pieper and others taught and trained future pas-

tors of our congregations in *Scriptural theology*?

D.

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● The Faculty-Approved Thesis on Christ's Descent Into Hell

Central District Convention

At the convention of the Central District, held in Fort Wayne in June, 1957, one of the essays was on "Christ's Descent into Hell." In this essay it was stated that "questions concerning this doctrine have arisen and do still arise" and then in a footnote it was added, "For example in the B.D. Thesis of Conrad Coyner 'The History and Scriptural Basis of the Doctrine of Christ's Descent into Hell' (Descensus ad Inferos) Critically Examined, Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, 1943, and Tracy, Calif. 1954." (*Proceedings, Cent Dist.*, 1957, p. 45, 57.) Thus the Central District took official notice of this St. Louis B.D. thesis.

Furthermore, at the Central District convention the essayist in his introductory remarks (these remarks were not inserted in the printed essay) allowed that the 1954 version of the B.D. thesis contained false doctrine, but alleged that the 1943 version (the version approved by the St. Louis faculty), although challenged as containing false doctrine, did not contain false doctrine. Thereby the Central District essayist publicly again raised the issue of the Scripturalness of that St. Louis thesis.

In the following we shall point out that this allegation of the Central District convention essayist is simply not true. We shall show that this allegation did not take cognizance of these facts: According to the B.D. thesis approved by the St. Louis faculty, the confession of the Central District, as printed in its essay, has *no basis in Scripture*, and is, therefore, *untenable*. The Central District, in the 1957 printed essay, has approved the Scripture doctrine of the Descent of Christ into hell, but the St. Louis faculty approved a B.D. thesis which holds that this doctrine has no basis in Scripture, and is, therefore, untenable. And here we shall consider only that version of the thesis which is faculty-

approved, except at two points where the 1954 (mimeographed) version will be referred to.

"The Development of the Myth"

The B.D. Thesis on Christ's Descent into Hell, as approved by the St. Louis Faculty in 1943 says:

"There are two vital observations to be made at the outset. The first is stated by Huidekoper: 'On leaving the Apostolic age we almost lose sight of the Christians in an *historical chasm* of sixty or eighty years. When they reappear on the hither side to it, we find, so far as their records enable us to judge, that, among all the parties into which they are divided, though with one modification . . . a belief has become firmly established that Christ performed a mission in the Underworld. The variety of discussions as to its nature prove the universality of belief in the supposed fact of the mission itself.'

"The other observation is made by Knox: 'The "myth" of a divine being who descends into hell and returns in triumph appears to go back to Babylonian religion; possibly it is derived from the character of Marduk (originally Tammuz) as a vegetation god (Kroll, *Gott und Hoelle*, p. 239.) The same *motif* appears in Egypt as a descent of the sun-god into the darkness of the underworld (ib. p. 185ff). The dualistic world-view characteristic of Iranian-Chaldean religion, which influenced the general Hellenistic outlook in which Christianity grew up, substituted for the descent of the savior-god into the lower world his descent through the spheres of the planets into the material cosmos.'

"I Cor. 2:8. That the 'rulers' crucified Jesus because they did not know who He was suggests the motif of the redeemer who passes through the various doors of the planetary spheres unrecognized. This is very commonly found in the Mandaean and Gnostic literature.'

"The development of the myth is traced by Kroll. It is clear that it appears in a fully developed form in the Apostolic Canons, but it does not appear in the creedal form of exorcism in Justin Martyr. . . . One is tempted to suspect that the story made its way from popular religion into liturgical Christianity with the help of isolated allusions in Scripture which sanctioned or seemed to sanction it.'" (P. 4f.)

"Early History of the Doctrine"

In his "Introduction" the Central District essayist referred to the "Early History of the Doctrine of the Descent." He cited as a "typi-

cal account of the Descent" various excerpts from the apocryphal Gospel of Nicodemus. Thereupon he quoted the remarks of Huidekoper cited also at the end of the B.D. thesis, "Would it not be more to the credit of Christians, if, instead of retaining as a part of their creed, and endeavoring to explain the above clause, they were candidly to admit, that it originated in the now untenable idea of an Underworld; . . ." The Central District essayist then continued: "But MacCulloh says: 'The details of the Descent legend in the Gospel of Nicodemus are one and all supported by or subscribed in Biblical language or referred back to Jewish tradition. That in itself, apart from other considerations, is sufficient to show that this interesting document does not borrow from Pagan conceptions.' We shall also see that the doctrine of the Descent is not an opinion of man or unscriptural." (*Proceedings*, Cent. Dist., 1957, p. 42.)

In short, the Central District rightly rejects the idea that the Descent of Christ into hell was borrowed from Pagan conceptions. It is not an opinion of man or unscriptural. But according to the thesis approved by the St. Louis faculty in 1943 "there are two vital observations to be made at the outset," namely, that belief in Christ's Descent into Hell appeared only after Apostolic times and that it arose in heathen mythology.

Here recall also the words of the faculty-approved thesis: "One is tempted to suspect that the story made its way from popular religion into liturgical Christianity with the help of the isolated allusions in Scripture which sanctioned or seemed to sanction it."

Who Descended? and Where Did He Go?

In explaining I Pet. 3:18ff, the Central District said: "Our answer to the question: Who descended into hell? is the reply of the Formula of Concord 'We simply believe that the entire person, God and man . . . descended into hell.'" (*Proc.*, p. 47.) Again, in explaining the term "prison" (phulake) in I Pet. 3:19 it said: "New Testament usage compels us to think of the prison as the place where both the fallen angels and the spirits of unbelievers are kept under guard." It then cites the 1956 C.T.M., "This section of First Peter clearly teaches that Christ descended to the region of the damned, to those who deliberately rejected God's grace in the time of Noah, in order to make proclamation to them." (*Proc.* p. 51.)

This Scriptural truth, confessed by the Central District convention, is *not taught any-*

where in the faculty-approved B.D. Thesis on Christ's Descent into Hell.

On the contrary, it is contended that it was the Pre-existent Christ who preached *through Noah and the other prophets* to the spirits held in confinement by sinful flesh, that is, to those people who lived before the time of Christ.

"The Pre-Existent Christ Who Preached"

The faculty-approved thesis states: "Brentz and others say that the dead and resurrected Christ, the God-Man of the completed atonement, but evident particularly in the spirit, i.e., without a visible body, but living and able to spiritually 'quicken whom He will' (Jn. 5:21), 'went and preached to the spirits in prison.' This was the Pre-existent Christ who preached through Noah, the 'Preacher of Righteousness' (II Pet. 2:5), and the other prophets of the Old Testament in whom dwelt 'the Spirit of Christ' (I Pet. 1:10, 11). Lightfoot says: (here follows a Latin quotation which in our own translation reads) 'It is manifest that Peter here speaks of the preaching of Christ through His Spirit, which occurred through the mouth and ministry of Noah, as I have explained in another place.'" (P. 40.)

A Direct Denial

Becomes an Indirect, Camouflaged Denial

The author of the St. Louis B.D. Thesis has always insisted that the 1954 mimeographed version was, except for several inconsequential changes, *that form in which he originally submitted his thesis to representatives of the St. Louis Faculty in 1943*. He has also insisted that at that time already he rejected the doctrine of Christ's Descent into Hell taught and confessed in our midst and that this was known to his faculty "readers." He has finally insisted that at the suggestion of one of the faculty readers he made certain changes which consisted chiefly in modifying his conclusions and in changing the thesis from the first person to the third person.

Definite, positive proof that the thesis was so changed at this point is found in the faculty-approved 1943 copy of the thesis now in the Pritzlaff Memorial Library. The 1954 mimeographed version reads at this point "We maintain then," instead of the words "Brentz and others say," and traces of "we maintain then," though erasures were made, can still be clearly discerned at this place in the faculty-approved 1943 copy.

Thus the thesis was changed from a direct to an indirect, camouflaged denial of the

Scripture doctrine confessed in our midst, and the impression is given that such denial of Scripture doctrine is not the position advocated by the thesis itself. The most dangerous enemies of the truth of God's Word are not the men who openly and manifestly attack and deny the truth, but the men who indirectly attack and deny the truth, or seek to explain away, or cover up what is obviously and actually a denial of the truth. The first enemies are readily recognized as such. But the latter betray the confidence of those who put their trust in them. The devil is never more dangerous than when he transforms himself into an angel of light.

Other erasures and emendations are still visible in the copy of the faculty-approved thesis at St. Louis, converting direct denials of the truth into denials by indirection.

"Sheol" and "Hades" Synonyms for Death

The thesis, as you may recall, presents a study of the "Scriptural basis" of Christ's Descent into Hell. But nowhere, absolutely nowhere, does the faculty-approved thesis maintain or even intimate that such a doctrine might have a Scriptural basis. On the contrary, from beginning to end, it attempts to show that there is no Scriptural basis for that doctrine confessed in our circles.

In chapter V (p. 30ff) the faculty-approved thesis takes up the meaning of "the terms *Sheol* (O.T.) and *Hades* (N.T.) as prerequisite for a proper understanding of subsequent argument in the following chapters of this paper. It is maintained by many exegetes that *Sheol* and its New Testament synonym, *Hades*, are employed in Scripture in either of two meanings: 1. to figuratively designate the abode of the dead (both good and evil dead), or 2. to literally designate a place of torment or everlasting punishment (exclusively for the evil dead). On the contrary, however, we maintain that in no instance does the context of Scripture even suggest, much less definitely indicate, a dual meaning for these terms. Rather are they used only in the one sense,—as a figurative or metaphorical designation of the state or abode of the dead, and therefore, *actually as a synonym for death.*" (P. 30.)

And as to the New Testament *Hades* it is stated, "In all eleven instances of the occurrence of *Hades* in the New Testament the context supports the definition of *Hades* as the abode of the dead and its use as a synonym for death." (P. 33.)

But what of the parable of the Rich Man in Hell (*Hades*), where the Rich man is

quoted as saying, "I am tormented in this flame"?

Here the B.D. Thesis approved by the St. Louis Faculty in 1943 says: "We suspect that most of the fallacious exegesis in regard to *Hades* is attributable to hermeneutically unjustifiable inferences drawn from the parable of the rich man and Lazarus (Lk. 16:19-31). In this extended metaphor of Jesus, the present life is compared with the next life, and the *tertium comparationis* simply presents the impossibility of conversion after death. Any doctrinal inferences beyond this *tertium*" [for example, that *Hades* denotes a place or state in which a person is tormented in flames before the Day of Resurrection, D.] "are drawn in defiance of accepted rules of interpretation. As far as we can determine, Christ figuratively portrays life after the Resurrection (from the time-conscious view), although we must ignore the detail of the brother's still living on earth. (Footnote.) This is the view of Dean R. Jesse in his B.D. Thesis." [We shall come back to Dean Jesse's thesis somewhat later. D.] "But we reiterate that no doctrine beyond the *tertium* can be validly supported by this passage. It must not be inferred from the presentation thus far that we reject the doctrine of hell (a place of eternal punishment). This doctrine is clearly taught in Scripture in the word *Gehenna* and many other expressions like: 'everlasting fire . . . everlasting punishment' Mt. 25:41, 46; 'furnace of fire' Mt. 13:42; 'eternal damnation' Mt. 3:39; 'shame and everlasting contempt' Dan. 12:2; etc. Here we are concerned with the significance of the words *Sheol* and *Hades.*" (P. 34f.)

The obvious conclusion of all this is that "hell" as a place or state of punishment *does not now exist.* (This is plainly stated in the 1954 mimeographed version of the thesis immediately after the reference to Dan. 12:2.) We shall return also to this matter somewhat later.

"The Spirits in Prison"

Remember this thesis represents a study of the "Scriptural Basis" of the Doctrine of Christ's Descent into Hell. But how does it attempt to explain away the Scriptural basis of the doctrine taught in our midst?

Regarding the word "prison" (*phulake*) it contends, "According to Thayer, it is derived from the verb *Phulasso*, which means 'to guard, to watch, to keep watch.' The noun then means 'a watching, a keeping watch, a guard,' and then by development 'a place of confinement, a prison.' We observe that of

the forty-six occurrences of this word in the New Testament there are none which cannot be correctly translated by one of the foregoing expressions. That fact, it is held, quite effectively eliminates the translation of *Phulake* with 'hell' or a 'place of torment.' (P. 42.)

The Thesis then explains "prison" as referring to the body and the "spirits in prison" as being the spirits or souls of men being held within the confines or prison of their corrupted bodies. "That is the tragic picture of all mankind, but it is, so it can be argued, particularly a picture of the Ante-deluvians, the classic example cited here by Peter of the spirits of men in such close confinement by the sinful flesh that even the salvation preached by Christ failed to free any but a small remnant." (P. 43.)

Thus the faculty-approved B.D. Thesis, which presents the "Scriptural Basis" of Christ's Descent into Hell, attempts to show that *there is no Scriptural foundation for the truth confessed by the Central District in its convention essay.*

But we have not as yet plumbed all the depths of the false doctrine enunciated by this faculty-approved thesis.

Rationalizing About the Relation of Time And Eternity

In chapter IV (P. 24f) the faculty-approved thesis on Christ's Descent into Hell quotes at length from the Bachelor of Divinity Thesis of Dean R. Jesse, *The Trichotomy According to Scripture*; in fact, there is comparatively little in this whole fourth chapter which is not a quotation from Dean Jesse's thesis.

In the fourth chapter the Thesis on Christ's Descent into Hell lays the foundation for its contention that time does not exist for the soul between death and the resurrection. And in chapter VI the conclusion is then drawn "that no spirits, possessing consciousness and individuality, can exist without bodies in which to manifest themselves. Therefore these spirits" (the spirits in prison according to I Pet. 3:19) "must have been in bodies and formed living human beings at the time they received Christ's preaching." (P. 44.)

After citing Dean Jesse "on the relationship of consciousness to the spirit," the Thesis on Christ's Descent into Hell immediately continues: "What happens, then, when death enters upon the scene? The death of Christ (Jn. 19:30; Lk. 23:46) and Stephen

(Acts 7:39) beautifully illustrate the separation of body and spirit, the latter returning to God who gave it. After three days God restored that spirit of Christ. Likewise at the resurrection God will restore that spirit to the material bodies and men will again be living souls. The theory assumes that at death, then, all consciousness, and in fact all existence ceases for the soul,—for man. There is therefore an interval between death and the Resurrection during which the deceased is non-existent. Most theologians, so it is charged, have consequently attempted to fill this interval with an intermediate state and with 'souls' in a semi-conscious and nebulous existence. But here, according to this theory, is the fallacy, for all statements in this paragraph have been written from the view-point of *time*. Suppose we regard man at death from the view-point of God in *eternity*. Dean Jesse has this to say: 'If we speak from the viewpoint of the spirit, existing in a world both spaceless and timeless, we must grant that *intervening time cannot exist for it*. A sequence of events is an impossibility in a timeless world. It (the spirit) is therefore already joined again to its body, for Resurrection Day is *already upon it at the instant of its departure* from the world of time to that which is timeless. More properly, and strictly, speaking, there is, from the timeless point of view of the spirit, no separation of itself from the body at all, for the sequence of events represented by disjunction and reunion cannot exist simultaneously, and if not simultaneously, then not at all. This being true, there is no necessity for the cessation of the spirit's manifestation through the body, and the soul enjoys, therefore, uninterrupted tenure of office in its capacity as the manifestation of the spirit.' (Footnote: The *Concordia Cyclopaedia* confirms this concept: 'Since with death all experience of time and space come to an end, the interval between death and the resurrection *does not exist* for the soul.' Under 'Souls-Sleep,' p. 716.)" (P. 26-27.)

The Penitent Thief Is Not Yet in Heaven

On the basis of such crass rationalism about the relation between time and eternity — the faculty-readers should have used a heavy blue pencil and crossed all this out and should have told the student that such rationalism cannot be tolerated within our circles—the faculty-approved Thesis on Christ's Descent into Hell then said of the Penitent Thief, "He knew that he would be with Christ that very day in Paradise, and if death, several

millennia, the Resurrection and the Judgment had to intervene, then as far as he and his consciousness were concerned they would all transpire in that one fraction of a day." (P. 29.)

In other words, according to the viewpoint of time, as *we* are now living in this world, the Penitent Thief did not enter Paradise on Good Friday, nineteen hundred years ago, and he will not enter Paradise until the Last Day of the world, the Day of Resurrection of all flesh, when time shall cease. As far as the Penitent Thief is concerned, there is no interval of time for his soul between his death and his resurrection on the Last Day.

No "Intermediate State"

Since, according to the thesis, no "intermediate state" exists, that is, since there is no interval of time between death and the resurrection of any soul, therefore a region of the damned does not now exist. Consequently the people who lived at the time of Noah could not have been in such a region when Jesus is supposed to have descended into hell to preach unto them.

"Peter leaves little room in this passage (I Pet. 3:18ff) or the rest of his epistles for speculation on an intermediate state, for he rather points to the climax of all Christian teaching, the resurrection of Christ and the consequent resurrection of all believers in Him. Here is his succinct chronology of Christological events: suffering—death—quickenings—resurrection—ascension—reign at the right hand of God. According to the view which we now discuss he mentions no descent into hell any more than do the Evangelists or any of the other writers of Scripture. As far as the work of atonement is concerned, there is no essential difference between Christ's quickening and resurrection, and therefore no plausible interim during which Christ might have visited hell." (P. 46f.)

Note that Christ's Descent into Hell is not listed in the "chronology of events" because according to the faculty-approved thesis such an event never occurred in the life of Christ.

Incomprehensible

In view of this incontrovertible evidence it is incomprehensible how any one can contend that the 1943 faculty-approved B.D. Thesis on Christ's Descent into Hell does not teach false doctrine. The thesis nowhere, absolutely nowhere, teaches or even intimates that Christ actually descended into the region of the damned, as the Central District rightly confessed at its 1957 convention.

On the other hand, this thesis, entitled "The History and *Scriptural Basis* of the Doctrine of Christ's Descent into Hell" (our emphasis), simply does not present anything else but that which is supposed to prove, and which asserts, that this doctrine has no basis in Scripture. And then to climax the denial and rejection of the Scriptural doctrine, it is contended that the region of the damned does not now exist. Christ, therefore, could not have descended into hell, as the Christian Church confesses in her Creed. — That is the whole argument, the whole body of this faculty-approved thesis.

D.

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MOTTO: *Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you: but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment.* — 1 Cor. 1, 10.

"We have no intention of yielding wight of the eternal, immutable truth of God for the sake of temporal peace, tranquillity, and unity (which, moreover, is not in our power to do). Nor would such peace and unity, since it is devised against the truth and for its suppression, have any permanency.. Still less are we inclined to adorn and conceal a corruption of the pure doctrine and manifest, condemned errors. But we entertain heartfelt pleasure and love for, and are on our part sincerely inclined and anxious to advance, that unity according to our utmost power, by which His glory remains to God uninjured, nothing of the divine truth of the Holy Gospel is surrendered, no room is given to the least error, poor sinners are brought to true, genuine repentance, raised up by faith, confirmed in new obedience, and thus justified and eternally saved alone through the sole merit of Christ." — Concluding Statement of the Formula of Concord concerning the Requirements of Confessional Fellowship among Lutherans of the Augsburg Confession. Trigl. Conc., p. 1065.

"It has been our purpose . . . that all unlawful, doubtful, suspicious, and condemned doctrines, wherever and in whatever books they may be found, and whoever may have written them, or even now may be disposed to defend them, might be exposed, distinctly repudiated, so that every one may be faithfully warned against the errors, which are spread here and there in the writings of some theologians, and no one be misled in this matter by the reputation (authority) of any man." — Formula of Concord (Thorough Declaration), Comprehensive Summary; Trigl. Conc., P. 857.

"These highly important matters (the business of religion) concern also the common people and laymen (as they are called), who, inasmuch as they are Christians, must for their salvation distinguish between pure and false doctrine." — Formula of Concord (Thorough Declaration), Comprehensive Summary; Trigl. Conc., P. 853.

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IN THIS ISSUE: Was Mary Born Without Sin? — Immaculate Conception of Mary and Her Assumption into Heaven Now Taught in St. Louis — The Mary-Cult in St. Louis — On the Union Front — The Middle-of-the-Roader — A Blessed Christmas! — A Suggestion.

● **Was Mary Born Without Sin?**

*The Roman Catholic Church Says Yes;
What Does the Bible Say?*

Not In Scripture

For a Protestant Christian, of course, the basic question will always be: Is the doctrine taught in Scripture? The answer to that question is simple but emphatic no! Indeed, Roman Catholic authorities make no serious effort to prove that the doctrine is taught in the Bible.

Nor, in their opinion, need they. This is a doctrine which they, admittedly, base upon

tradition — tradition which, for them, has become "the word of God."

But for the Protestant seeker after truth, let us nail down this point firmly and forever: There is nothing in Scripture which, directly or indirectly, explicitly or implicitly, teaches that the mother of our Savior was conceived and born without sin. In fact, the Bible teaches quite the opposite:

What Does the Bible Say?

The Bible tells us that Mary was a pious Jewish girl whom God selected to be the virgin mother of His Son (Luke 1:26-38). That, and little more.

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"As soon as we look more to our synod than to the
invisible kingdom of God, the kingdom of grace and salva-
tion, we begin to be a sect. For this is really the essence
of sectarianism that one has his eye on his little fellowship
above all, even though the kingdom of God may suffer
harm thereby." "That preacher is no true preacher who
merely seeks to fanaticize his congregation for the Lutheran
Church, or for the Missouri Synod, or, worse still, only for
the Iowa District. Such men are bad preachers. They must
rather direct people to Christ and say: See, we preach the
pure Word of God, in which the everlasting Gospel of
Christ is continued; that is why you should adhere to us,
and therefore we say, leave us as soon as we no longer do
this! For salvation by no means depends on us, nor also on
the Missouri Synod. So if it no longer preaches the pure
Word of God, then it is worthy of nothing but that one
forsake it." — Dr. C. F. W. Walther, "Concerning the Chief
Obligations Which a Synod Has if it Rightly Wants to Bear
the Name of an Evangelical Lutheran Synod." Doctrinal Essay
at the First Convention of the Iowa District of the Lutheran
Church—Missouri Synod, 1879; Proceedings, pp. 112, 114.

It tells us that Mary was a sinful human
being, in need of God's forgiveness, and that
she "rejoiced in God her Savior" (Luke 1:47).

It tells us that when Mary rebuked the
twelve-year-old Jesus in the Temple, He found
it necessary to rebuke her, respectfully but
firmly, with the words: "Wist ye not that
I must be about My Father's business?"
(Luke 2:49).

It tells us that when Mary presumed to
intrude upon His ministry at the wedding
feast at Cana, He found it necessary, with all
due respect, to put her in her place. "Woman,
what have I to do with thee?" (John 2:4).
The sense of the Greek original could per-
haps be given better: "When it comes to
My divine ministry, what do you and I have
in common?"

Of Mary's declining years the Bible tells
us next to nothing. All we know is that after
the Savior's crucifixion the Apostle John
"took her unto his own home" (John 19:27).
The last time she is mentioned in the Bible
is in Acts 1:14, where we are told that she
was with the disciples in Jerusalem during
the days preceding the first Pentecost.

It is significant how *little* the Bible tells
us of the mother of the Savior.

Only One Sinless Person

The Bible knows of only one Person who
was immaculately conceived and born with-
out sin, and that is Jesus Christ. "God made
Him to be sin for us who knew no sin, that
we might be made the righteousness of God
in Him" (II Cor. 5:21).

Protestants are happy to remember Mary
as the one woman whom God honored above
all others — by selecting her to be the human
mother of Jesus Christ, His only Son.

But Protestants refuse to share in the
idolatry of the Roman Catholic Church, which
down through the ages has added fiction to
fiction until today the mother of Christ has
been exalted to a position almost equal to
that of her divine Son.

Protestants still believe that fiction is
fiction, no matter who proclaims it as fact!

(All of the above is from a tract by
Concordia Publishing House, published under
the title given above.)

● Immaculate Conception of Mary and Her Assumption into Heaven Now Taught in St. Louis

A Seminary Chapel Address

At the "Feast of the Visitation of the
Blessed Virgin Mary" (July 2nd), 1957, Dr.

A. C. Piepkorn, professor of Systematic Theology, delivered a chapel address at Concordia Seminary in St. Louis in which he spoke of "pious opinions long held by Christians" regarding the Virgin Mary. The address recently appeared in the High Church publication *Una Sancta*.

Dr. Piepkorn says: "Here we stand with Blessed Martin Luther. In his exasperated distress at the exaggerations of the medieval Mary cult, he might declare: 'I should wish that the veneration of Mary be altogether exterminated solely on account of its abuse.' Yet three years before his death he was still affirming in print the opinion that he had worked out in detail and with considerable theological ingenuity twenty-five years earlier, namely, that through the merits of her Son-to-be the Blessed Virgin was marvelously preserved from the taint of sin from the first moment of her existence as a human being. We who have been reading him at least in English will recall that in the *Exposition of the Magnificat* he calls 'Queen of Heaven' a true enough name for her, and that elsewhere he acknowledges her as a gracious Lady exalted above all empresses.

"We remember that so doughty an adherent of the Augsburg Confession as Blessed John Brenz could say of the bodily taking up of the Blessed Virgin into heaven: 'About this let everyone think as he will.' And that the great Lutheran hymn-writer and preacher of the late seventeenth century, Blessed Valerius Herberger, presents a careful justification of this theological opinion in a sermon in his *Evangelische Herzpostille*. It is when these pious opinions are elevated to the status of dogmas which must be believed under pain of eternal condemnation that we declare this kind of constraint — rather than the opinions themselves — to be antichristian and diabolical." (*Una Sancta*, 1958, Visitation, p. 5.)

And as to the Symbols, Dr. Piepkorn says: "They cheerfully concede that in the presence of God she (Mary) is interceding for the entire Church upon earth." (P. 6.)

Praying to Mary

As a good Roman Catholic, Luther in a sermon of 1519 said that in the hour of death a Christian should call upon "all holy angels, especially his angel, the mother of God, all apostles and dear holy saints" in fellowship with Christ to help him overcome death, sin, and hell. (Weimar ed., 2,696.) But in his *Exposition of the Magnificat* (1521) he already said, "All those who heap such great praise and honor upon her are not far from

making an idol of her." (St. Louis Ed., VII, 1403.) Yet in this connection he does not merely "call 'Queen of Heaven' a true enough name for her," — as Dr. Piepkorn contends — but already at this time he warns: "It is necessary also to keep within bounds and not make too much of calling her 'Queen of Heaven,' which is a true enough name and yet does not make her a goddess who could grant gifts or render aid, as some suppose when they pray and flee to her rather than to God." (P. 1409.) Luther insists that Mary does not desire to be an idol and yet at this comparatively early date he continues: "We ought to call upon her, that for her sakes God may grant and do what we request. Thus also all other saints are to be invoked." (P. 1410.)

However, already in a sermon commemorating the birth of Mary and published in 1522 Luther expressed his anxiety that Mary was being extolled more than was proper. (XI, 2364.) He referred to the hymn *Salve Regina* (Greetings, O Queen!) as being "blasphemy." "And thus it is also with the (hymn) *Regina coeli*. That is not much better, that she is called a Queen of Heaven. Is that not bringing dishonor upon Christ, when one ascribes to a creature that which belongs and pertains to God alone? Let us therefore desist from such ungodly and un-Christian words. Gladly I would have Mary pray for me. But that she should be my comfort and my life — that I do not want. Your prayers are also just as dear to me. How so? If you believe that Christ dwells in you as in her, then you can help me just as much as she can." (P. 2368.) Luther would give Mary all honor that God has bestowed upon her, but she should not be made an idol. "As an intermediary we will not have her, but as an interceder we would gladly have her, as also all the other saints." (P. 2369.) A decade later, Luther said that it does not follow from the fact that Mary says that all generations would call her blessed, "that a person should call upon the Virgin Mary, take comfort in her intercession and seek and expect help from her in various temporal and spiritual needs. . . . Let's go no further than praising her; but to worship, to intercede and grant help — that should all be restricted to the Lord Christ." (XIII, 1225.)

"Blessed Mary Prays for the Church"

We noted that Luther would gladly have Mary and the other saints pray for us. Article XXI (IX) of the Apology treats of the Invo-

cation of Saints and there we read: "We also grant that the angels pray for us. For there is a testimony of Zech. 1:12, where an angel prays: O Lord of hosts, how long wilt Thou not have mercy on Jerusalem? Although concerning the saints we concede that, just as, when alive, they pray for the Church universal in general, so in heaven they pray for the Church general. . . . Moreover, even supposing that the saints pray for the Church ever so much, yet it does not follow that they are to be invoked. . . . The adversaries not only require invocation in the worship of saints, but also apply the merits of the saints to others and make of the saints not only intercessors, but also propitiators." (*Triglotta*, p. 345.) Here the Apology says that even though we concede that the saints pray for the Church in general, it does not follow that we should invoke the saints; much less should we regard them as mediators. As an example of invoking the saints and regarding them as mediators the Apology then refers to the case of a certain dying man on whom the prayer was pressed: "Mother of grace, protect us from the enemy; receive us in the hour of death." Previously the Apology had conceded that the saints pray for the Church. Mary, of course, is assumed to be one of the saints. Continuing, the Apology therefore says: "Granting that the Blessed Mary prays for the Church (*Ut lagiamur, quod beata Maria oret pro ecclesia*), does she receive souls in death, does she conquer death, does she quicken?" (*Triglotta*, p. 349.)

But what does the St. Louis professor make of this statement? In his chapel talk he refers to the Symbolical Books and then says "they cheerfully concede that in the presence of God she (Mary) is interceding for the entire Church upon the earth." Bad as the manner of thus referring to the Confessions is, it is nothing compared to the manner in which Dr. Piepkorn cited this statement of the Apology in his *What the Symbolical Books of the Lutheran Church Have to Say About WORSHIP AND THE SACRAMENTS* (1952), p. 7. There, without any explanation or further comment, he simply published in quotation marks: "Blessed Mary Prays for the Church" (Ap. XXI (IX) 27).

To cite the Confessions in this manner can only give a wrong impression and is wholly inexcusable and reprehensible.

The Roman Doctrine of an Immaculate Conception of Mary

The feast of the Conception of Mary (not of the *Immaculate* Conception of Mary) was first celebrated on December 8th in the 12th century. At that time it was generally held that Mary was conceived in original sin but was later cleansed in her mother's womb.

Following Anselm (*Cur Deus Homo*, II, 16), Peter Lombard (*Sent.* II. d. 30. n. 9), Bernard of Clairvaux (*Ep.* 175.7), Alexander (*Summa Theol.* II. q. 105. m. 7. a. 7), Bonaventura (*Sent.* III. d. 3. q. 1ff), Albert Magnus (*Sent.* III. d. 3. 3. 5), and Thomas Aquinas (*Summa Theol.* III. q. 14. a. 3), all held that the Virgin Mary was conceived in original sin. Aquinas said: "The Blessed Virgin Mary did indeed contract original sin, but was cleansed therefrom before her birth from the womb." (Q. 27. a. 2.) As a result of such cleansing or sanctification she "committed no actual sin, neither mortal nor venial." (Q. 27. a. 4.)

But Duns Scotus (d. 1308) advanced as an hypothesis the probability of an immaculate conception of Mary. If Mary was cleansed from original sin in the womb of her mother, what hinders the assumption that God created Mary's soul without sin and that He preserved her soul from the corruption of original sin, when her soul was united with the body produced by the coming together of her parents? And if the grace of Baptism deletes original sin in the baptized, could not God delete original sin in Mary from the "first instant" of her conception? (*Sent.* III. d. 2. q. 1. n. 3ff; cf Report. III. d. 18. q. 1. 14ff.)

This doctrine of an immaculate conception of Mary, which Duns Scotus had advanced merely as a probable assumption, became the subject of a violent controversy between the Scotists or Franciscans and the Thomists or Dominicans, but ended in the victory of the Scotists in 1854, when Pius IX declared it to be a dogma of the Roman Catholic Church that "the most blessed Virgin Mary was, in the first instant of her conception, by the singular grace and privilege of Almighty God, in view of the merits of Christ Jesus, the Savior of the human race, preserved free from every stain of original sin."

At the time of the Reformation the Scotist doctrine was prevalent; but Luther tells us in 1521 that at that time it was not regarded as "heresy" to hold that Mary was "conceived in original sin," even though councils, popes, and the great majority of theologians held

the contrary opinion. (St. Louis Ed., XV, 1548.)

Did Luther Teach an Immaculate Conception of Mary?

In a sermon on the Feast of the Conception of Mary we are told that there is nothing in the Gospel "nor in Scripture" that Mary was "conceived without original sin." (St. Louis Ed., XI, 1950.) In this sermon it is also said that some held that Mary was conceived in original sin but that she was sanctified in her mother's womb. Others distinguish between a conception of the body which is the result of the union of a man and his wife and another conception which takes place when the body prepared in the womb receives the soul infused in that body by the Creator. Mary "could have been preserved from original sin until the soul," that is, until the soul was infused in her. "But as to the other conception, namely, the infusion of the soul, it is benevolently and blissfully believed that it occurred without original sin, so that in the infusion of the soul she was at the same time cleansed from original sin and adorned with God's gifts to receive a holy soul, infused into her by God, and was therefore without all sin from the first moment that she began to live." (P. 1960.)

Dr. Piepkorn contends that "three years before his death he (Luther) was still affirming in print the opinion that he had worked out in detail and with considerable theological ingenuity twenty-five years earlier." He then refers to this sermon of Luther.

The Weimar edition of Luther's works, Vol. 17/2, p. 280, footnote, says that Rodt, the editor of the 1527 edition of the *Church Postil*, in the first part of the sermon made "strong" use of a sermon preached by Luther in 1517. But on page 519 it is said: "The rest (of the sermon) seems to be his (Rodb's) work." [It is towards the end of this sermon that the words in question are found.] In other words, the Weimar edition raises serious doubts as to whether Luther actually said these words even in 1517. The Latin sermon of 1517 printed in the Weimar Ed., 4,625f does not contain them. The St. Louis edition of Luther's works in a footnote says that the statement regarding the "other conception" — which is supposed to have occurred when God infused a soul into Mary's body — is not repeated in the 1528 and 1532 edition of the *Church Postil*. In these editions it is merely stated that Mary could have been preserved from original sin prior to the infusion of the soul and then it is added: 'But what God did with Mary in

this other conception is not indicated to us in Scripture; hence nothing certain dare be preached here as requiring faith. Thoughts (opinions) are free and everyone may think as he pleases; just so that he does not make it an article of faith." (St. Louis Ed., XI, 1960.)

There is therefore grave doubt whether these are actually Luther's words. But even if this sermon actually does reproduce Luther's own thoughts and words, it does not follow — as Dr. Piepkorn contends — that this sermon says anything that Luther "had worked out in detail and with considerable theological ingenuity." The sermon is merely repeating and upholding the Scotist doctrine over against the Thomist doctrine. The Scotist doctrine of an immaculate conception of Mary had been worked out in detail by the Scotists long before Luther. (See development of this doctrine from Scotus to Luther in Preuss, *Die roemische Lehre von der unbefleckten Empfaengnis*, 1865, pp. 31-67.)

Dr. Piepkorn contends that "three years before his death he (Luther) was still affirming in print the opinion" expressed in this sermon. But as we shall see, Luther's statement of 1543 does not even refer to the immaculate conception of Mary but to Mary's conceiving Christ without sin. Already in 1523, in explaining the *Ave Maria*, Luther said that Mary "conceived without all sin." (St. Louis Ed., XI, 2202.) In a sermon of 1532 he says: "Mary was indeed born of sinful parents and in sin even as we are. But the Holy Ghost came upon her and sanctified and cleansed her so that this child was born of flesh and blood but not of sinful flesh and blood." (XIII, p. 2676f.) The context clearly shows that this cleansing occurred in the moment when Mary conceived Jesus. See also sermon of Dec. 25, 1534, XIII, p. 1481. And it is in reference to this same cleansing that Luther said in 1543, three years before his death: "It was necessary that his mother was a virgin, a young virgin, a holy virgin, who redeemed and cleansed of original sin by the Holy Ghost, should bear no more than one son, one Jesus who could be certain to us as her Siljah, fruit, the seed of her body, without a father, a sole Christ." (XX 2098.)

Luther clearly held and taught that Mary was cleansed from sin *when the Holy Ghost came upon her* so that a "holy thing" was born of her. In other words, Luther held and taught an immaculate conception of Jesus, but there is grave doubt that he ever held and taught an immaculate conception

of Mary. Dr. Piepkorn in a footnote refers to R. Schimmelpfennig, *Die Geschichte der Marienverehrung im deutschen Protestantismus*, 1952, who contends that Luther (in 1517) represents exactly the same view which was elevated to a dogma by the Roman Church in 1854. That book, incidentally, was written to further the *Una Sancta* movement which seeks *rapprochement* with Rome by returning to a "Catholic" Luther. If there is to be a return to Luther, let it be to a Luther as he really was and not as seen through Rome-colored glasses.

The Assumption of Mary

In 1950 Pius XII declared it to be a dogma of the Roman Catholic Church that the body of Mary was assumed into heaven, a belief which can be traced back to the fifth and sixth century. *Our Sunday Visitor*, Aug. 11, 1957, admits that the Assumption of Mary is not "stated in Holy Scripture" and is based "not so much on historical facts as on theological speculations."

The Feast of the Assumption of Mary was observed in Rome since the seventh century. In a sermon commemorating that feast in 1522 Luther says that it is not necessary to know how the saints fare in heaven; it is enough to know that they live in God. (St. Louis Ed., XI, 2353.) But in a sermon on the Visitation of Mary (1532) Luther said that the "feast of the assumption of Mary is altogether papistical, that is, full of idolatry, and was instituted without any basis in Scripture. . . . We Christians know of no ascension into heaven except that of our dear Lord Jesus Christ." In this connection Luther says that the pope has brought shame and dishonor upon the ascension of Jesus "by trying to make the mother in all things like unto the Son." (XIII, 1208f.)

Dr. Piepkorn refers to the words of Brenz in 1541, as cited by Dr. Schimmelpfennig, *Op. cit.*, p. 26, "About this let everyone think as he will." But Dr. Schimmelpfennig points out that according to Brenz's sermon at the Feast of the Assumption some believe that Mary is according to her soul in heaven and according to her body on earth, resting there unto the completion of the world; while others hold that she was with body and soul taken into heaven. Brenz admits that Mary could have been taken up bodily into heaven, as Enoch was transferred bodily into heaven and as the bodies of the saints arose with Christ. But that is uncertain. Certain is only that she lives with Christ, her Son, until He shall come and be manifested in all His glory with all the saints.

Dr. Piepkorn also points to Valerius Herberger as presenting a "careful justification" of the bodily assumption of Mary. Herberger says that many notable writers, both ancient and modern, are inclined to the view that Mary was taken up bodily into heaven, because that view does not contradict any article of faith, does not take anything away from what we must believe for our salvation, and because we have in Scripture the prior example of Enoch and Elijah; that her bodily assumption into heaven is therefore altogether possible. All this merely shows how an otherwise faithful Lutheran theologian may err in permitting himself to go beyond the Word of God and base his teaching on mere speculation. It is the part of Christian charity to cover up blemishes of fathers as far as possible; not to expose them to view, and much less to try to support one's own un-Scriptural teachings with them.

"Pious Opinions"

Dr. Piepkorn finally contends: "It is when these pious opinions are elevated to the status of dogmas which must be believed under pain of eternal condemnation that we declare this kind of constraint — rather than the opinions themselves — to be antichristian and diabolical." In other words, the pope's declaration in 1854 by which he elevated the doctrine of an immaculate conception of Mary to the status of a dogma and in which he stated that whoever dares to believe otherwise in his heart has made shipwreck concerning the faith and has defected from the unity of the Church, and his similar declaration of 1950 in regard to the assumption of Mary, this kind of constraint is antichristian and diabolical. But to hold or teach such opinions — as that was done within Roman Catholicism even long before the time of Luther — is not antichristian and diabolical.

God's Word says: "If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God," I Pet. 4:11. "He that hath my word, let him speak my word faithfully. What is chaff to the wheat? saith the Lord," Jer. 23:38. A true Christian theologian should speak where and as far as God's Word speaks and he should hold his tongue where God's Word is silent. No one has the right to go beyond the Word of God and peddle "pious opinions" about a supposed exalted position of Mary at any Christian seminary or in any Christian pulpit. Let's not honor Mary more than God Himself honors Mary.

It is just in connection with the false views concerning Mary that it has rightly been

said: "Every error which is not rooted out by repentance is a capital, which according to God's order is transmitted with compound interest until the completion of the lie chokes off the last remnant of the truth."

D.

PASS YOUR COPY OF THE CONFESSIONAL LUTHERAN ON TO SOME FRIEND

② The Mary-Cult in St. Louis

Progressing step by step in his Romanistic views, as High Church men usually do, Dr. Arthur C. Piepkorn, Professor at Concordia Seminary in St. Louis, is now contending for the right publicly to teach "pious opinions" long held by Catholics. Specifically, he is currently contending for the right to teach that "the Blessed Virgin was marvelously preserved from the taint of sin from the first moment of her existence as a human being," not to mention that it is also supposed to be quite all right to teach that she was taken bodily into heaven.

Dr. Piepkorn's polemics in this matter are contained in a chapel address delivered on the Feast of the Visitation of the Blessed Virgin Mary, 1957. The address was recently published in the third issue of the High Church organ *Una Sancta* (Feast of the Visitation) for the year 1958.

The St. Louis professor first sets up his position negatively, in the following strange statement concerning Mary: "We need not feel obligated to blacken her reputation and to invent transgressions for her to have committed, as if somehow we were saved by the sinfulness of the Blessed Virgin rather than by the sinlessness of her Son."

And now, as he sets forth his convictions positively, on what does Dr. Piepkorn base his contention? Not on Holy Scripture — which teaches nothing of this sort — but (supposedly) on Luther, whom he does not understand; on isolated expressions of one or two other Post-Reformation theologians taken out of their context; and on one or the other hymn, which he again for the most part does not seem to understand at all.

The most that Dr. Piepkorn could possibly hope to prove in this way would be that the men and the hymns referred to contain mistaken views with regard to the subject in

hand. But precisely this is what Dr. Piepkorn does not at all attempt to do. He rather seeks to find support for his own erroneous teaching in the real or supposed blemishes of others. Not only does he fail in his purpose, but his attempt exposes his scholarship as well as his own theology to severest censure.

In discussing Dr. Piepkorn's chapel talk, we shall limit ourselves to an examination of his references to Luther and to the hymns to which he refers, leaving other details to another article on the subject by one of our colleagues.

Did Luther Teach an Immaculate Conception of Mary?

Speaking of the "pious opinions" for which he contends, Dr. Piepkorn says: "Here we stand with Blessed Martin Luther. . . . Three years before his death he was still affirming in print the opinion that he had worked out in detail and with considerable theological ingenuity twenty-five years earlier (Sermon on the Gospel for the Feast of the Conception of the B.V.M., 1517, Weimar Edition, 17/2, 288), namely that through the merits of her Son-to-be the Blessed Virgin was marvelously preserved from the taint of sin from the first moment of her existence as a human being. (Vom Schem Hamphoras und vom Geschlecht Christi, 1543; Weimar Edition, 53, 640.)"

Let us look, first, at the last reference to Luther given by Dr. Piepkorn. Here, discussing the immaculate conception of *Christ* (not of Mary), Luther says: "It was necessary that His mother should be a virgin, a young virgin, a holy virgin, who was *redeemed and cleansed* from original sin by the Holy Ghost." ("Darum war es not, dass seine Mutter waere eine Jungfrau, eine junge Jungfrau, eine Jungfrau, die von der Erbsuende *erloest und gereinigt* durch den heiligen Geist, nicht mehr denn Einen Sohn, Jesum truege, der ihr Siljah, Frucht, ihres Leibes Samens, ohne Vater, ein einiger Christus uns gewiss sein sollte." (St. Louis Edition, XX, 2098. Our emphasis.) This is in perfect agreement with Lk. 1:35: "The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee" etc.

How altogether different this is from what Dr. Piepkorn would have Luther "affirming" here three years before his death, in 1543! Dr. Piepkorn has Luther affirming that "through the merits or her Son-to-be the Blessed Virgin was marvelously preserved from the taint of sin from the first moment

of her existence as a human being." Certainly, to be cleansed from something, as Mary was to be, at the conception of Jesus the Savior, and to have been preserved from it from the first moment of one's existence, are two altogether different things! Indeed, one hardly needs to be cleansed from something by which one has never been defiled! That Mary was cleansed and sanctified [when the God-Man Christ was conceived by the Holy Ghost of the Virgin Mary] is what Luther says in his publication of the year 1543 referred to; that she was "marvelously preserved from the taint of sin from the first moment of her existence as a human being" is the teaching of the Roman Catholic Church and of Dr. Piepkorn, and is falsely attributed by the latter to Luther, three years before his death.

And now for the other contention of Dr. Piepkorn with reference to Luther. Dr. Piepkorn says that in 1517 Luther "had worked out in detail and with considerable theological ingenuity" this opinion, "that through the merits of her Son-to-be the blessed Virgin was marvelously preserved from the taint of sin from the first moment of her existence as a human being."

This opinion was worked out, not by Luther in 1517, but by the celebrated Franciscan Scholastic, John Duns Scotus, the *Doctor Subtilis* of Roman Catholicism (1265-1308). It represents substantially the teaching of the Immaculate Conception of Mary which after much controversy finally became the accepted papal doctrine in 1854. Still freely opposed to it in the Catholic Church at Luther's time was the somewhat earlier teaching of the Prince of Scholastic Theologians, Thomas Aquinas (1226-1274), according to which Mary was conceived in original sin, but cleansed from it before birth and preserved from actual sin.

In the sermon referred to as published in the *St. Louis Edition* of Luther's Works, XI, 1950-1961, both views, which, as stated, were at that time still in debate in the Catholic Church and therefore equally permissible as so many "pious opinions," are marshalled in review. This is the sermon Dr. Piepkorn refers to as being from the year 1517. At that time Luther was still to all intent an obedient son of "the Church": a good Catholic, a good Romanist, a good papist. He was as yet but convinced that individuals within "the Church" were guilty of abuses, — abuses which the pope himself would not sanction; it was against such that his

famous 95 Theses were directed. Only gradually did Luther emerge from the darkness of the Middle Ages to the light which spelled out the Reformation. His doctrinal development is carefully traced for instance in the recent monograph *The Communion of Saints* by H. A. Preus. As a good child of Rome, Luther in 1517, could in keeping with the principles of the Catholic Church well have said with reference to the two views concerning the conception of Mary then yet permissible: "Opinions are tax-free, and everyone may think as he will; only so that one does not make an article of faith of it." This position, which was the position of Rome at that time, is still shared by the Romanizing Dr. Piepkorn.

But did Luther really teach that "the Blessed Virgin was marvelously preserved from the taint of sin from the first moment of her existence as a human being"? In ascribing to Luther such a statement at all, even only as one accepted from others, and repeated by him, there is being attributed to him something which seems to have been later added to his sermon of 1517 by its editor, Stephen Rodt, in the first two editions of his (German) Postil that appeared during the Reformer's lifetime (both of which were published in the year 1527) and which was excised from the two subsequent editions (1528 and 1532), because of its content, as is carefully pointed out in footnotes to his works (St. Louis Edit., XI 1961). That Luther had soon come from darkness to light in this matter as he did in other matters of Christian faith and life, his works consistently show, as is likewise clearly demonstrated at the place referred to. Indeed, the very sermon under discussion begins as follows: "The festival of the Virgin Mary, as to how she was conceived without original sin, is observed on this day. This festival has made for much unpleasantness, quarreling, and dispute among the monks, [the Dominicans contending for the Thomist view, and the Franciscans just as violently for the Scotist opinion] without producing anything good at all, since nary a single letter concerning this is to be found in the Gospel or anywhere else in Scripture." But in the chair of systematic theology occupied by Dr. Piepkorn in St. Louis Middle-Age darkness still reigns supreme.

The Lutheran Hymnal and the Grace Which Mary Experienced

Referring to our Lutheran hymnbook and the mention of Mary, Dr. Piepkorn says: "In one of our most popular Christmas carols

we describe her as the prophetically foretold 'Branch of loveliest form and grace' (*Lutheran Hymnal*, C.P.H., 1941, No. 645. No. 341 calls her by the medieval title 'Mystic Rose'), while at least two others describe her as 'undefiled' (Nos. 95, 104)." Just what Dr. Piepkorn means to prove by the first two of the references here given is not wholly clear. But at least so much is clear, that he is evidently captivated by the word "grace" and some gross misunderstanding or other of the use made of that word here. As for the other two references, why of course Mary was undefiled in the conception and birth of our Savior, Lk. 1:35! Referring to another hymn, Dr. Piepkorn says: "A hymn that we have sung in this summer's series of chapel services paraphrases the Eastern Church's *Theotokion* [Hymn of the Birth of God]: O higher than the cherubim, More glorious than the seraphim, Lead their praises!" This thoroughly Catholic hymn should have been left to that Church, to which it rightly belongs. Unfortunately the Anglican John A. L. Riley introduced it among Protestants by contributing his version of it to the *English Hymnal* in 1906. More unfortunately still, it was taken up in the *Lutheran Hymnal* (C.P.H.) 1941 without any emendation of its objectionable stanza (No. 475, st. 2). We have always protested against this; and we were happy to hear Pres. Behnken object to it as being untruthful at our last convention (Iowa District East, 1958) and to hold out to us the hope that this false teaching would not appear in the contemplated new edition of our hymnal.

How far Dr. Piepkorn goes in his Maryology is shown by his further statement: "If in our hymns we call her as we do — 'most gracious' and 'full of grace,' (Nos. 475 and 98 respectively), it is because God has filled her with the grace of which His Son is the incarnate expression." (Our emphasis.)

The first of these two references is again to the hymn to which objection has already been raised.

As for the second reference (Hymn No. 98), "full of grace" must be considered an unfortunate rendering of Lk. 1:28, translated "highly favored" in the Authorized Version (where cp. also the angel's words: in v. 30: "Thou hast found favor — Greek: *charin* — with God"). Indeed, this "full of grace" as a rendering of Lk. 1:28 in the Vulgate (followed by Wyclif and Tyndale) and in Rome's Douay Version, which has reached its climax in the Hail Mary Litany of the Catholic Liturgy ("Hail Mary, full of grace.

... Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners now and in the hour of death") is simply wrong. The translation should read: "endued with grace." *Begnadigte* would be exact German rendering of the Greek (*kecharitoomenee*). The translation of this hymn No. 98 in the *Lutheran Hymnal*, "Of the Father's Love Begotten," the original Latin version of which (*Corde natus ex Parentis*) by Aurelius Prudentius (348-418) does not contain the expression "full of grace," is by the Anglican priest John Mason Neale and was first published in *Hymns, Ancient and Modern* (1861) by forty clergymen, of whom another Anglican priest, Henry W. Baker, who was especially notorious as a High Church man, was chairman. "*Hymns, Ancient and Modern*, spread 'not only high-church views and practices but the high-church atmosphere beyond the sphere of hymnody.'" (Benson, in *The English Hymn*, quoted by W. G. Polack in *The Handbook to the Lutheran Hymnal*, C.P.H., 1942, p. 478.) All of this makes the hymn's use of "full of grace" understandable.

"Full of grace" (Greek: *pleerees charitos*), which is not used of Mary in Holy Scripture, is used of Stephen in Acts 6:8 according to a well attested reading, although other manuscripts, which the A.V. follows, have "full of faith" (Greek: *pleerees pisteos*). However, this would then, according to the immediate context and the general rule of faith (clear passages of Scripture) refer to grace received. There is a world of difference between speaking thus and speaking of a mere human being's being full of grace "because God has filled her with the grace of which His Son is the incarnate expression," — that grace which is an active, giving grace. Indeed, when St. John writes in the Gospel (1:14): "The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the Only-Begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth," this is the same as to say that "In Him dwelleth all the fulness of the God head bodily," Col. 2:9. Should anything like this be said of Mary? Is it not plain blasphemy to say as much of her?

How Far is it from St. Louis to Rome?

In the early days of the Missouri Synod it happened once and again that men who taught at St. Louis apostasized to Roman Catholicism. The first of these, Hermann Baumstark, who had a checkered European background, taught secular subjects (German, Latin, history, geography, mathematics) from

1864 to 1869 in the proseminary of the practical institution which at the time was located in St. Louis and which is now in Springfield, Ill. The other, Dr. Eduard Preuss, came out of the United Church of Prussia, the fellowship of which he publicly renounced. A man of eminent intellectual gifts and superb dialectical skill, he was author of two excellent monographs, one on *Justification*, and the other a thorough exposure of the real sources of *The Roman Doctrine of the Immaculate Conception* (of Mary) and its refutation by Holy Scripture. He held a professorship in St. Louis from 1869-1871. A vitriolic opponent of Missouri, who had been a parochial school teacher in one of the St. Louis congregations under Walther until the predestinarian Controversy of the '80's, when he joined the Ohio Synod, in his later years wrote a German monograph on *Walther and His Times* which presents such a distortion and caricaturization of facts as to be not only truly amazing but positively amusing. Here it is stated with an allusion to the two apostates under discussion, that "it is but a step from St. Louis to Rome." However, *Hermann Baumstark was deposed from his office as soon as he revealed his Romanistic interests. And as for Dr. Preuss, he promptly resigned under pressure when he was faced with expulsion because of a shady business deal; only after this did he reveal leanings to Rome and embrace its confession.* The present incumbent of the Presidency of the Missouri Synod not so long ago tried to soften down the fact that in recent years a number of graduates under the tutelage of Dr. Piepkorn joined the Catholic Church by saying that it has happened in the past that men among us have left us to become members of the Roman Church. But we are not faced merely by such a parallel of events. We are rather faced by the dreadful tragedy that *a professor at our seminary can teach, and continue to teach, Roman Catholic doctrine on an ever increasing scale, and openly polemicize against the contrary true Scriptural teaching of the Lutheran Church and of the Missouri Synod.* This, and nothing less than this, is what Dr. Piepkorn is doing. He is publicly contending for the right to teach such "pious opinions" as that "the Blessed Virgin was marvelously preserved from the taint of sin from the first moment of her existence as a human being" and her bodily assumption to heaven. He advocates prayer for the souls of the dead. He contends for the right to respond with adoration at the elevation of the sacramental host in the

"Mass." He openly teaches a sacramental priestly order, to which one is admitted only by an Ordination which is supposed to be efficacious by divine right. He "proves" this by citing as a "statement" of Article XIV of the Augsburg Confession a statement that does not exist there at all, namely the statement that no one should publicly teach or administer the Sacraments *nisi sit rite vocatus et ordinandus ad hanc functionem*, — "unless he be rightly called and ordained unto this function." Art. XIV of the Augsburg Confession in its entirety actually reads: "Of Ecclesiastical Order they teach that no one should publicly teach in the Church or administer the Sacraments unless he be regularly called;" nothing more. There is not a word in it, either in its German original or in its Latin version, about any necessity of being *ordained unto this function (et ordinandus ad hanc functionem)*.

But all of this, and more such papal doctrine, is now freely taught by Dr. Piepkorn.

Certainly the Constitution of the Missouri Synod, which says "The President has the supervision regarding the doctrine" (Art. XI) has become a dead letter today. Either that, or false teaching such as that of Dr. Piepkorn is itself now officially Missourian, — official in that it enjoys the sanction of highest Synodical officialdom. In any case: *We are no longer what we once were!* Here is where our real trouble lies!

God help us! Amen.

P. H. B.

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● On the Union Front

Lutheran Editors

The NLC News Bureau reports concerning the 1958 meeting of the National Lutheran Editors' and Managers' Association at Minneapolis, among other things, the following:

"For the first time, a member of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod was named president of the editor's section. Unanimous choice for the post was Dr. Lorenz F. Blank-

enbuehler of St. Louis, editor of the Lutheran Witness, the official organ of the Missouri Synod."

Sentiment among the speakers was running high in favor of union of all Lutheran bodies, including the Missouri Synod, into one Lutheran Church in America.

"However, the Rev. Alfred P. Klausler of Chicago, editor of the Walther League Messenger and a pastor of the Missouri Synod, said he was 'pessimistic' about the possibilities that Missouri would join the NLC in the near future.

Dr. L. F. Blankenbuehler of St. Louis, editor of the Lutheran Witness, official bi-weekly of the Missouri Synod, said his Church always is ready to join with other Lutheran bodies 'but on the basis of doctrine.'

"There must be unity in doctrine before we can work together,' he emphasized. 'We have got to see eye to eye on the doctrine of the inspiration of the Bible because that's fundamental.'"

It seems, though, that Dr. Blankenbuehler's point didn't go on through. Dr. F. A. Schiotz, President of the Evangelical Lutheran Church, addressed the convention dinner on the subject of the future of the National Lutheran Council. "Expressing the hope that there will be 'an enlarged area' of common endeavor, he suggested that there might be 'two under one shed' in the re-organized Council. Practical matters in which the Missouri Synod co-operates, such as relief, refugee work and chaplaincy services, might be conducted on one track, he said, while on the other could be the more 'intimate' work in which matters of faith are involved."

It could be that Dr. Schiotz was here throwing a lateral right past Dr. Blankenbuehler and into the lap of a Missouri Synod convention, in the near future, which might be emotionally conditioned to run toward his goal.

When Editor Malmin of *Lutheran Herald* (Oct. 21, 1958, p. 15) reminisced on the meeting in his editorial columns, he concluded: "It is also our conviction that the third great group of Lutherans, the one dominated by the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, will be drawn into more and more co-operative work. Thus, over a period of years, we do not doubt that the steps now being taken will result in a more closely unified Lutheranism — with the dream of a thoroughly unified American Lutheranism beckoning in the not too distant future."

(Edit. Note: The first time Missouri's *Lutheran Witness* editors attended a meet-

ing of the NLC Editors' Association, it was explained in Missouri's official publication that this is "a loose organization" for the purpose of discussing "technical questions." — P. H. B.)

Short Notes

Before us lies a folder presenting the order of service on Sunday, January 26, 1958, 11:00 A.M., at the Rockefeller Memorial Chapel, the University of Chicago. The program explains: "The preacher today is The Reverend Jaroslav Pelikan, Associate Professor of the History of Christian Thought, Federated Theological Faculty, University of Chicago. The service is conducted by The Reverend John B. Thompson, Dean of the Chapel. Mr. Pelikan and Mr. Thompson will be in the Chapel Office following the service to greet members of the congregation."

The St. Louis Lutheran of Aug. 9, 1958, reports that Dr. Jaroslav Pelikan declined a professorship at Luther Theological Seminary in St. Paul, Minn., an institution of the Evangelical Lutheran Church. He is quoted as saying: "... that, for the present at least, I should remain in the interdenominational setting. It is in this setting, after all, that most of the professors at most of our seminaries, including Luther Seminary, will have to be trained." The report also states: "He also indicated that if he should leave Chicago he would likely go back into the service of the Missouri Synod, either at Valparaiso University or at Concordia Seminary, St. Louis."

Here is a program folder of the order of service for the Easter Sunrise Service by the Sea, Fort Amador, Canal Zone, April 6, 1958. Among the listings is the Call to Worship by Chaplain Frederick Zigan, the Old Testament Lesson by Chaplain Thomas L. McMinn, the New Testament Lesson by Chaplain John Hollingsworth, the Pastoral Prayer and Lord's Prayer by Chaplain Robert G. Nelson, the Benediction by Chaplain John P. Ettershank, and — "The Easter Sunrise Service speaker, the Reverend Doctor E. R. Bertermann. . . director of Overseas Operation of the International Lutheran Hour."

A page — wide photo in *The Lutheran* (Nov. 20, 1957, p. 8) surmounts this news story: "Five Lutheran bodies were represented at Reformation celebration held in Episcopal cathedral at Washington, D.C. With Dean Francis B. Sayre, Jr. of the cathedral (left) are Dr. Frederick E. Reissig (ULC), the Rev. William R. Bruening (Missouri), Dr. Clarence T. Nelson (Augustana), Dr. Fredrik A. Schiotz (ELC), Dr. John A. Scherzer

(ALC), and the Rev. Carl R. Simon (ULC). Lutheran Ministerial Association sponsored the service."

The Lutheran Standard, official organ of the American Lutheran Church (May 24, 1958, p. 5) reports on the convention of the Wisconsin District of the ALC: "Two lectures 'The New Imperialism,' by Dr. Alvin Rogness, and 'Foes and Foundation,' by Dr. A. R. Kretzmann, highlighted the Wisconsin District convention, held Apr. 28-May 1 at Immanuel — Trinity church, Fond du Lac." Dr. Rogness is president of the Evangelical Lutheran Church's Luther Seminary, and Dr. Kretzmann is pastor of the Missouri Synod's St. Luke Church, Chicago.

Dr. Paul C. Empie, Executive Director of the National Lutheran Council, predicts that the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod will take up membership and "full participation" in the NLC within the next ten years.

The Chicago Tribune, Sun., Oct. 5, 1958, reports that among those who will appear as speakers during the Chicago Sunday Evening Club's 52nd season is the Rev. Dr. Otto P. Kretzmann, president of Valparaiso University.

From *The American Lutheran*, Sept., 1958, p. 22: "The Lutheran Society, Inc. of New York, an inter-synodical organization of pastors and laymen, has engaged the auditorium of the Hotel Astor, for a Reformation Rally, October 31st this fall. The Rev. Oswald C. J. Hoffmann, D.D., Public Relations Director of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, will be the speaker."

Did you notice the feature article on Dr. Hoffmann, from the *Minneapolis Star*, reprinted in *The Lutheran Layman* (Aug. 1, 1958, p. 9), especially this paragraph? —

"At 44, he is on his way to becoming one of the leading figures of world Lutheranism. He is being mentioned for the presidency of his denomination, the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod."

Election year. There must be a fan club in the twin cities.

(Edit. Note: An article in a recent issue of the *St. Louis Lutheran* publicized a statement of Dr. Behnken announcing his readiness to accept another presidential term. The same issue contained an editorial aimed at warding off the charge of campaigning. — P. H. B.)

Statement of the Year

"It is apparent that God graciously continues to bless our Synod with doctrinal

unity." From "What's New in Synod?" by Dr. J. W. Behnken (*Lutheran Witness*, Sept. 9, 1958, p. 15).

A. V. K.

☉ The Middle-of-the-Roader

The middle-of-the-roader always shuns what he calls extremes. Refusing to move over to either side, he is the most dangerous man on the highway.

There is an argument underway. One party says that two and two makes four; the other party says it is six. The middle-of-the-roader steps in and with a great show of finality says that both of these two parties represent "extremes;" the right answer is five. Thus, while neither one of the disputants may be wholly satisfied, neither one has been wholly alienated by partiality's having been shown to the other, and the day is saved.

No; such things are not done in the field of mathematics. But they are done every day by "leading" churchmen where infinitely more than mere figures — the eternal salvation of men — is involved. Indeed, this is one of the prime factors for the *status quo*, the mess, that churches find themselves in today.

Beware the middle-of-the-roader!

P. H. B.

☉ A Blessed Christmas!

We trust that amid the many dark clouds on the lowering horizon in these last evil days none of our readers will ever forget that the grace of God that brings salvation to all men has appeared, and that this grace teaches us that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world, looking for that blessed hope and the glorious appearing of our great God and Savior Christ Jesus who gave Himself for us that He might redeem us from all iniquity and purify unto Himself a people for His own possession, zealous of good works. (Tit. 2:11-14.) In this spirit we wish all of our readers a most blessed Christmastide!

The Editorial Staff.

☉ A Suggestion

Why not order two copies of *The Confessional Lutheran*? One for your own files, another to be passed on to others. Some of our readers are doing this. You can put friends under grateful obligation to yourself.

Do it today!